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**New Hampshire**  
**Department of Health and Human Services**  
**Division for Children, Youth and Families**  
**2015 – 2019**  
**Child and Family Services Plan**  
**2016 Annual Progress and Services Report**  
**June 30, 2015**



June 30, 2015

Nancy Pickett, Child Welfare Specialist  
Administration for Children and Families: Region I  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
JFK Building – 20<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02203

Dear Ms. Pickett:

On behalf of the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families, I am pleased to provide you with the Division for Children, Youth and Families' 2016 Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) for the 2015-2019 Child and Family Services Plan, (CFSP). The CFSP was based on the outcomes of our 2010 Child and Family Services Review, our internal Case Practice Reviews, analysis of administrative data, feedback from staff, youth and families, and a variety of community stakeholders. The development of the CFSP focused on the successful implementation of our statewide Practice Model. This APSR provides updates on the continued implementation of New Hampshire's Practice Model and other key goals and initiatives outlined in last year's CFSP. The CFSP and subsequent APSRs can be viewed electronically through the following link:

<http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcyf/publications.htm>

The Division views the Child and Family Services Plan as a blueprint that has accelerated our ability to effectively serve the needs of children and families in our state.

If you have any questions about this comprehensive plan, please contact Michael Donati, Grants Administrator, at the number listed above.

Thank you for your continued support for this and New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families' other family-centered initiatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Lorraine Bartlett", written in a cursive style.

Lorraine Bartlett  
Director



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# NEW HAMPSHIRE DIVISION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES 2016 ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICES REPORT

## Section 1: General Information / Introduction

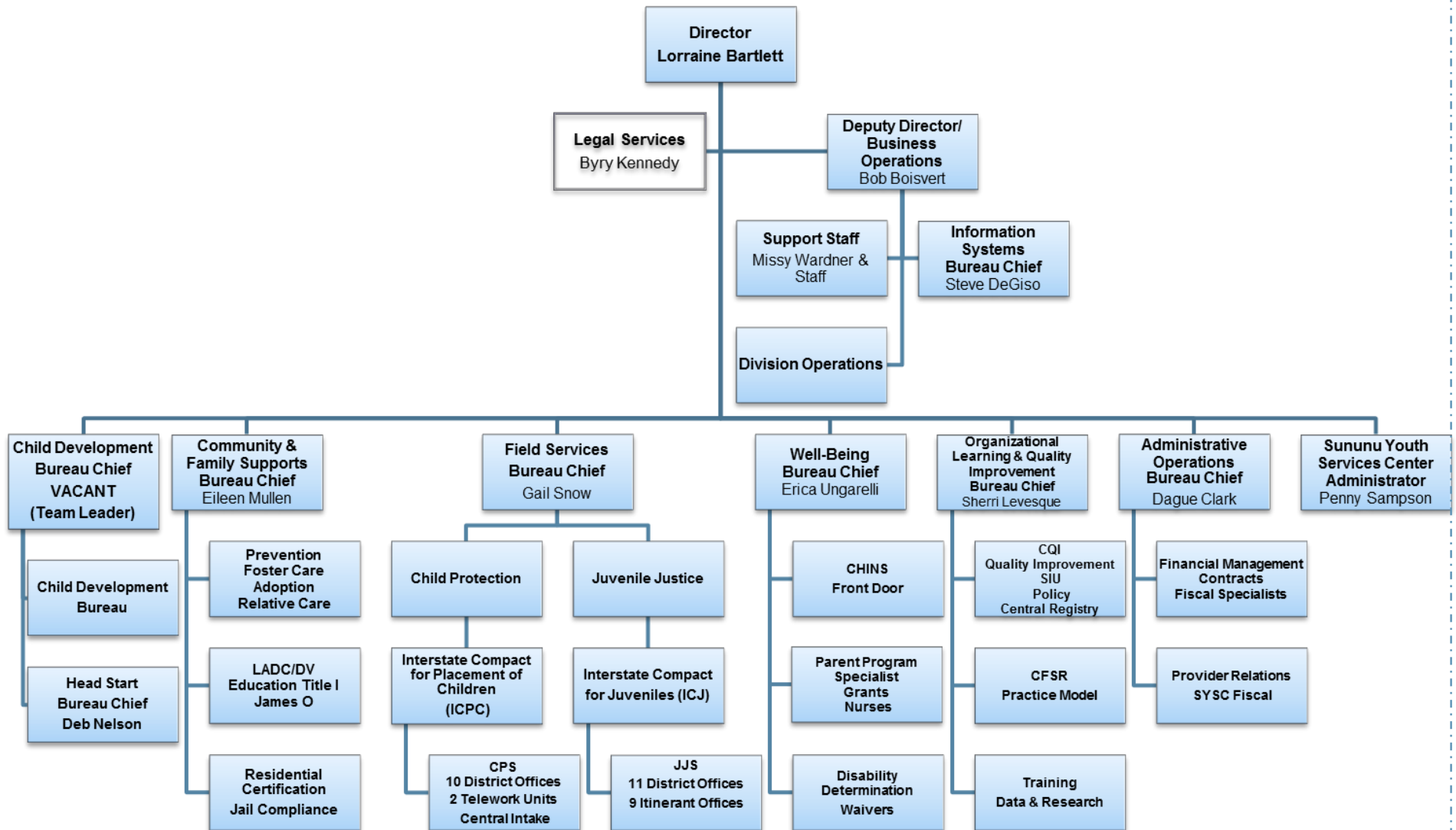
### STATE AGENCY ADMINISTERING PROGRAMS UNDER THIS PLAN

New Hampshire's public response to the safety, permanency, and well-being of children is framed in the Child Protection Act. This law mandates that New Hampshire's Department of Health and Human Services, acting through the Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF); respond to children and families affected by those factors that put children at risk of harm by abuse and neglect. The New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families is the state agency responsible for Title IV-B programs under this plan.

Child Welfare and Child Protection are human service endeavors that require continuous self-assessment, critical review and adaptation to new understandings of best practice, legal mandates and collective social need. The 2015–2019 Child and Family Services Plan is a “living document” that provides purpose and direction, while being adaptive and responsive to the changing landscape of Child Welfare during this planning cycle, as well as ongoing recommendations from internal Quality Assurance Processes, staff, families and community stakeholders. The 2016 Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) represents the first annual update on the progress the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families has made in achieving its goals set forth in the 2015-2019 Child and Family Services Plan.



## Division for Children, Youth and Families Organization Chart



## **Division for Children, Youth and Families Vision and Mission Statement**

### **VISION**

We envision a state in which every child lives in a nurturing family and plays and goes to school in communities that are safe and cherish children.

### **MISSION**

We are dedicated to assisting families in the protection, development, permanency, and well-being of their children and the communities in which they live.

### **COLLABORATION**

The 2015 - 2019 Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) was established in partnership with community stakeholders, the Division for Children, Youth and Families Oversight Panels, the Division's Management Team, and field staff from Child Protective Services, Juvenile Justice Services and the Sununu Youth Services Center (SYSC). The Division's Bureau of Well-Being is responsible for the development and monitoring of the CFSP.

As part of the development of the 2015 - 2019 Child and Family Services Plan, the Division engaged external stakeholders in several forums, including the Division's Annual Conference in April 2014, and administered a Strategic Plan Survey. This survey was completed by 169 community stakeholders.

The survey presented the Division's two proposed goals for the CFSP; Practice Model Mastery and further enhancement of the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process. The survey gathered feedback related to stakeholders' awareness of the Division's Practice Model, the Practice Model's connectivity with their respective Division's goals, how they would like to partner with the Division in accomplishing these shared goals, and what would be the most efficient and effective way to involve them in the implementation of New Hampshire's CFSP.

Of the 169 surveys completed by external stakeholders, seventy-eight percent (131) indicated having an awareness of the Practice Model. Twenty percent (thirty-four) answered "No" and two percent (four) did not answer the question. When answering the question regarding how the Division's two primary goals (Practice Model and Continuous Quality Improvement) connected with their agency's goals, the two most common answers were "through shared practices" at thirty-eight percent and "shared family engagement work" also at thirty-eight percent. When describing what stakeholders would need in order to partner with the Division in accomplishing these goals, thirty-six percent stated they would need "face-to-face discussions with local Division Staff" and thirty-two percent stated they would need "information about the Division for Children, Youth and Families practice". Lastly, when talking about the most effective and efficient ways to involve stakeholders in the implementation of the Child and Family Services Plan over the next five years, fifty-three percent indicated they would need to be active

“participants in committees/workgroups” and thirty-eight percent indicated they would “like to participate in face-to-face focus groups”.

These survey results provided information regarding stakeholders’ awareness of the Division for Children, Youth and Families’ key strategies, but also greatly informed how the Division can continue to engage stakeholders in the coming years, which will best position the Division to achieve the goals outlined in the CFSP.

At the DCYF Annual Conference held on May 8, 2015, the Division Director, Lorraine Bartlett, facilitated a “Town Hall” Meeting with approximately thirty internal and external stakeholders. The forum provided an opportunity for a mutual exchange of information between the Division Director and stakeholders that will help inform the future steps DCYF will take to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in the current Child and Family Services Plan.

Additionally, a workgroup was formed with internal Division for Children, Youth and Families Staff to develop a strategic communication plan for the Practice Model.

The purpose of the Practice Model Communication Plan is to ensure the Division informs the right people about the Divisions unified beliefs. Through the process of sharing information, the Division will enhance the understanding of how the Practice Model Beliefs guide the decisions made, influence Division interactions, assist the Division in changing attitudes and perceptions, and ensure the sustainability of ongoing communication.

In order to accomplish effective communication of the Division’s Practice Model across various levels of the organization as well as with community members, the Division identified that it must tailor its message to three unique audiences:

1. To individuals who follow Division policies and/or administrative rules. Specifically, these are individuals the Division has control over their employment, internship, mentorship and/or opportunities to volunteer;
2. To individuals who work with DCYF families, and although the Division has influence over how they work with the families, the Division has no control over the individuals’ actual employment; and
3. Lastly, to individuals who are not governed by the Division’s Policies or Rules.

The plan will be implemented in three phases, phase I will be completed in mid to late November 2015, followed by phase II information and discussion sessions, ending with phase III regional town halls.

As previously stated, the plan includes a sustainability factor. The Division attends to its Practice Model in new staff orientation, within Division Training Curriculum, and annual performance evaluations. Additionally, the information is shared with the community during various conferences and community presentations that the Division facilitates. The Division will continue to incorporate practice expectations that align with Division beliefs within policies, administrative rules and provider certifications when they need to be updated.

## **Coordination with Juvenile Justice**

Juvenile Justice Services is a Bureau within the Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). The Child Protection and Juvenile Justice Field Services operate under one administrative structure and share practice initiatives such as Solution Based Casework, the New Hampshire Practice Model, a Case Practice Review process, and the use of the same case management information system, a shared service array and a joint case planning policy for families involved with both systems. There is a shared priority for maintaining improvements in permanency through concurrent planning, specific practice improvements and collaboration with the courts. This work continues to be strengthened through the development of the New Hampshire Practice Model that aligns the work in Child Protection, Juvenile Justice and the Sununu Youth Services Center.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families maintains integrated policies and procedures that bring consistency, while continuing to value and preserve the specialized knowledge and practices in Child Protection, Juvenile Justice Field Services and the Sununu Youth Services Center.

This clearly supports the Division's ongoing commitment to moving forward jointly in field practices, systemic integration, and collaboration with partners and stakeholders. Through the analysis of the State Data Profile, Division Leaders and Managers are using timely, accurate data to analyze child and family outcomes. Priority efforts continue and include working closely with the courts, residential and community-based service providers, staff, parents and youth to enhance data collection and outcomes measurement that drive vital practice changes.

Management of both Juvenile Justice and Child Protection are under one Bureau Chief and six field administrators. This team meets weekly with the Bureau Chief to address field service's needs, and to support the implementation of the Practice Model Strategies. This collaboration between the two Bureaus has resulted in a strong administrative team that has set the stage for enhanced collaboration in the field between Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers and Child Protective Services Workers. All Field Supervisors from both Juvenile Justice and Child Protective Services continue to meet jointly on a monthly basis to share information and discuss practice. This has resulted in strong partnerships on the local level.

## **Collaboration with the Courts**

There has been a long-standing practice of the Division, the courts, and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) working together to address system challenges. This practice has been successful in eliminating barriers and improving practices across each system. Many of these activities were driven or supported by the Court Improvement Project (CIP).

### **COURT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

In New Hampshire, the DCYF and the Court Improvement Project Coordinator have maintained meaningful, ongoing collaborations that have clearly resulted in each system being able to successfully identify and work toward shared goals and activities. New Hampshire engages in multidisciplinary work to plan and carry out cross-system training. Through this collaboration

the Division has created the ability and the structure to provide ongoing training across the State, as needed, to ensure that future changes in staff within any system could receive training on the court guide.

There are and have been many joint statewide learning opportunities and program initiatives that are based on the collaborative efforts of the Division and the Court Improvement Project, including ongoing grant applications and strategic plans. In New Hampshire there is a true partnership that has resulted in improved practices and improved relationships between both the Division and the courts. These relationships have enhanced current initiatives and program activities by guaranteeing a continued commitment to permanency for children and families.

The New Hampshire District Court, Family Division, Probate Court, and Superior Court, the Division for Children, Youth and Families, representatives from the Bar, Legislature, Court Appointed Special Advocates, Judicial Council, law enforcement, and the Attorney General's Office continue to partner in addressing solutions to child safety, permanency, and well-being when families are involved in the Court System because of child abuse or neglect, child delinquency, or status offenses.

The Model Court Project, which is a collaboration of the courts, the Division and CASA, has focused its attention over the past year in the further development and evaluation of Protocols related to Post Permanency Hearings in cases with a permanency goal of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement. A statewide training is planned for October 30, 2015 in anticipation of a statewide roll-out. These protocols provide direction to the courts and the Child Welfare System as to best practice standards in Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) cases. It will also incorporate the requirements of recent federal legislation pertaining to APPLA.

### **Division for Children, Youth and Families Oversight Panels**

Please refer to Division for Children, Youth and Families Oversight Panels in Section Two under "Agency Responsiveness to the Community" for further description.

## Section 2: Assessment of Performance

### CHILD AND FAMILY OUTCOMES

The Division has utilized a Case Practice Review process to evaluate performance outcomes for safety, permanency and well-being for both Child Protective Services and Juvenile Justice Services Cases. Specifically, New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families has continued to mirror the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) by using the federal On-Site Review Instrument (OSRI – Round 2) quarterly in different offices on a case selection drawn similarly to the CFSR. In 2014/2015 the following Case Practice Reviews were conducted using this methodology:

Claremont District Office	June 2014
Conway District Office	September 2014
Concord District Office	December 2014
Manchester District Office	March 2015
Seacoast District Office	June 2015*

*\*This review was conducted the week of June 1, 2015. Results are not yet available, and therefore not included in the data below.*

The results of these four Case Practice Reviews include data from eighty-nine cases based on case file review as well as interviews with children, youth, parents and collaterals. Case level data is broken down as follows:

Child Protection Cases -	44
Juvenile Justice Cases -	45
and	
Placement Cases -	55 (JJ- 27 and CP- 28)
In-home Cases -	34 (JJ- 18 and CP- 16)

During Case Practice Reviews, data is also obtained through stakeholder surveys which are collected electronically. Stakeholder names are provided by the offices and include persons representing a range of agencies, including courts, local school districts, Court Appointed Special Advocates, community mental health centers, domestic violence crisis centers, police departments, child health services, and the Division's service providers. A parent focus group, held during the week of the Case Practice Review, has been added to the process during the past year, and provides information about the office's ability to include parents as partners.

The aggregated results for the Safety, Permanency, and Well-being Outcomes from the 2014/2015 Case Practice Reviews are:

### Case Practice Review 2014/2015

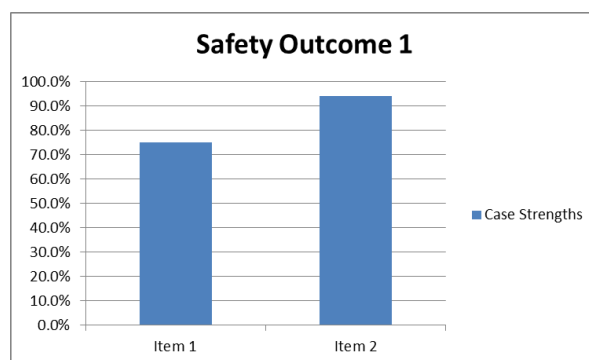
#### CPS & JJS

	Substantially Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
Outcome S1	76%	3%	21%
Outcome S2	80%	11%	9%
Outcome P1	67%	33%	0%
Outcome P2	72%	28%	0%
Outcome WB1	60%	31%	9%
Outcome WB2	100%	0%	0%
Outcome WB3	90%	2%	7%

JJS				CPS			
	Substantially Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved		Substantially Achieved	Partially Achieved	Not Achieved
Outcome S1	63%	0%	38%	Outcome S1	86%	5%	9%
Outcome S2	76%	9%	16%	Outcome S2	84%	14%	2%
Outcome P1	63%	37%	0%	Outcome P1	70%	30%	0%
Outcome P2	70%	30%	0%	Outcome P2	74%	26%	0%
Outcome WB1	53%	36%	11%	Outcome WB1	66%	27%	7%
Outcome WB2	100%	0%	0%	Outcome WB2	100%	0%	0%
Outcome WB3	91%	2%	7%	Outcome WB3	90%	3%	8%

## Safety

**SAFETY OUTCOME #1: CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE**



According to the results of the 2014/2015 Case Practice Reviews, this outcome was seventy-six percent substantially achieved, three percent partially achieved and twenty-one percent not achieved across both Child Protective Services and Juvenile Justice Services.

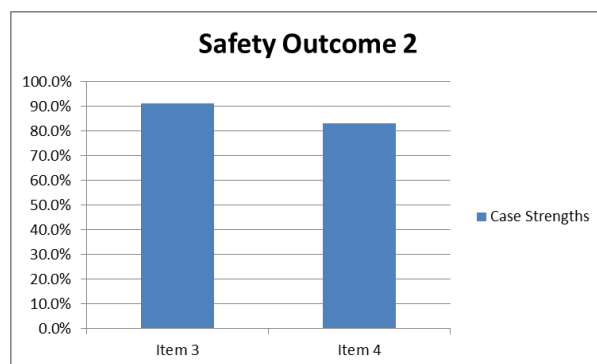
Further analysis of these results finds that the Division for Children, Youth and Families did well in securing the safety of children particularly in the area of maintaining low levels of repeat maltreatment. This may have been impacted by the overall historical trend in New Hampshire of low levels of substantiating maltreatment on all assessments in general. A workgroup of Child



Protection Staff including assessment workers, supervisors, and administrators has recently been formed to look at substantiation rates and this work will continue throughout the upcoming year. It was also likely impacted by the effective work done with victims in assessments and cases, including efforts to interview victims within timeframes, assess at the outset and ongoing for safety and risk, and to visit with children at least monthly in both Child Protection and Juvenile Justice cases.

A majority of assessments were initiated and victims were seen or attempted to be seen in a timely manner. Combined results of the four Case Practice Reviews from 2014 through 2015 indicate this was true in seventy-five percent of assessments. The smaller Case Practice Review sample is consistent with statewide Supervisory Reports and Results Oriented Management (ROM) data on all assessments between July 1, 2014 and May 27, 2014, which demonstrates that in seventy-four percent of assessments, timeframes were met for seeing victims. Although, there remains room for improvement in this area overall, the rate for seeing victims within timeframes has remained consistent from the prior year, which indicated that seventy-five percent of victims were seen within timeframes. This remained consistent despite the fact that over three hundred more assessments were screened in during the 2014-2015 timeframe (approximately a four percent increase) compared to the same time period the year before. According to Supervisory Reports and ROM, rates for seeing victims were met most of the time for the assessments with the shorter response priority levels (24 hours), and assessments with longer response priority levels (48 to 72 hours) were less often seen within timeframes. Seeing victims in timeframes in order to assure safety of children and youth remains a strong focus of the Division and discussions are held monthly at an administrative level during Leadership meetings and on an individual level between supervisors and workers.

## SAFETY OUTCOME #2: CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE



According to the of the 2014/2015 Case Practice Reviews, this outcome was eighty percent substantially achieved, eleven percent partially achieved, and nine percent not achieved across both Child Protective Services and Juvenile Justice Services. Child Protective Services overall performance was better in this area (eighty-four percent substantially achieved and two percent not achieved) compared to Juvenile Justice Services (seventy-six percent substantially achieved and sixteen percent not achieved).

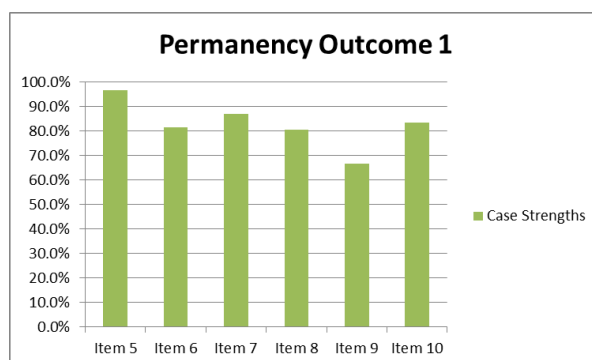


Further analysis of these results finds that the Division did well in this area as referrals to services were frequently made and there was a strong use of services (both community and in-home) provided by the Division in both Child Protection and Juvenile Justice Cases. Services were found to be effective in helping to assure safety for children and minimize risk of both initial placement and re-entry into care for reunified youth. Although not a paid service, the work that Child Protective Service Workers (CPSW) and Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers (JPPO) did with families was also valuable in preventing placement.

The effective use of services also aided with assessing ongoing and frequently for safety and risk to children in their homes. In addition, both CPSWs and JPPOs met monthly with youth (most frequently alone) and their families, which provided a mechanism for ongoing informal assessments of safety and risk. The use of formal assessments (New Hampshire Integrated Assessment Model and Juvenile Justice Services Risk Assessments including the SAVRY), positively impacted this outcome as well. Areas needing improvement overall continue to be assessing all children in the home and assuring an updated assessment of the home is conducted before and after reunification. In addition, further efforts are needed to assess all adults in the home and absent or non-custodial parents for their impact on the safety and risk of children. Efforts to include all children and all parents and adults in the home in assessments of safety and risk have been included, in some format, in all of the Practice Improvement Initiatives developed with these four offices following their Case Practice Reviews.

## Permanency

### PERMANENCY OUTCOME #1: CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS



According to the results of the 2014/2015 Case Practice Reviews, this outcome was sixty-seven percent substantially achieved, and thirty-three percent partially achieved across both Child Protective Services and Juvenile Justice Services. None of the eighty-nine cases were rated as Not Achieved on this outcome.

The Division has excelled during this period in minimizing out-of-home placement re-entries as demonstrated by the combined rating of ninety-seven percent on Item 5 of the On-Site Review

Instrument over the four Case Practice Reviews conducted between June 2014 and March 2015. Based on data from Results Oriented Management (ROM) between June 1, 2014 and May 22, 2015, of youth who have been discharged from care twelve months prior, ninety percent did not re-enter care, indicating that a statewide sample is aligned with the smaller Case Practice Review sample. Based on qualitative data from the Case Practice Reviews over the past year, services put in place upon reunification were helpful in minimizing re-entry into care.

While Child Protective Services continued to score fairly well in ensuring placement stability, this was an area needing improvement in Juvenile Justice Services. For Child Protection, the use of relative placement providers and committed foster homes was found to positively impact this outcome during the Case Practice Reviews conducted since June 2014. When placement changes were needed for youth in care through both Child Protective Services and Juvenile Justice Services, they typically were appropriate to move forward the permanency plan for the child and were based on the child or youth's needs. The use of shelter care in Juvenile Justice Service was found to be a system level challenge that resulted in lower scores on this Item.

Both Child Protective Services and Juvenile Justice Services have had a sustained focus on identifying case plan goals timely (often on or immediately following the date of placement), which is seen in the rating of eighty-seven percent strengths in the combined results of Case Practice Reviews between June 2014 and March 2015. However, in cases where this Item remained a challenge, it appeared that most permanency goals were appropriate but that timely identification was still not consistent.

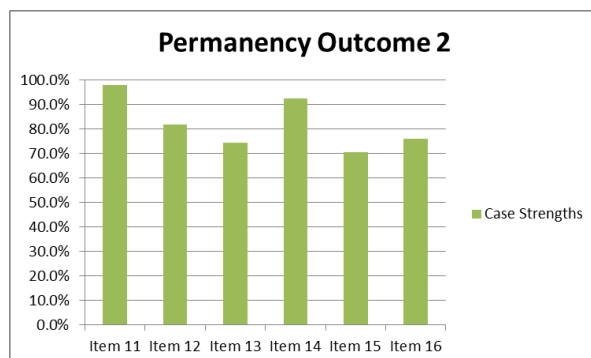
Item 8 combined results of the Case Practice Reviews since June 2014 indicate that eighty percent of the time both Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Services made concerted efforts towards case plan goals of reunification, guardianship, and permanent placement with relatives. Concerted efforts were made in reunification cases towards the goal of reunification, and in fact statewide data indicates that New Hampshire demonstrated improvement in the number of children reunified within twelve months of placement. Specifically, ROM data is consistent with Case Practice Review data in that the percentage of youth reunified within twelve months of placement has ranged up to eighty-three percent since June 2014. Qualitative data collected during the Case Practice Reviews since June 2014 indicated that efforts towards reunification were extensive with primary caretakers, but that although this improved, New Hampshire still experienced challenges with efforts with absent and/or non-custodial parents. As such, efforts to engage with absent and non-custodial parents were identified as an improvement goal in every office's Practice Improvement Initiative over the past year. Other common themes discovered through a review of the Case Practice Review results over the past year include: 1) efforts made by providers assisted with concerted efforts towards these case plan goals; 2) involving relatives in cases early enhanced efforts toward both reunification and alternate permanency goals; and 3) increased efforts towards concurrent goals were needed ongoing throughout the life of the case.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families' most significant struggle in this outcome continued to be in efforts to move children and youth to the goal of adoption, as indicated in a rating of sixty-seven percent on the combined results of Case Practice Reviews 2014/2015. A qualitative look at this Item does show that when parents were engaged early in permanency, children and youth were more likely to be adopted within twenty-four months. However, a

majority of the time when adoptions took longer than twenty-four months, it was most typically due to delays in the court process.

Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement case plan goals have been a significant focus of practice over the past years. During Case Practice Reviews occurring between June 2014 and April 2015, efforts toward achieving these goals when they are identified were found eighty-three percent of the time. The Division was able to secure placements for youth (relative and foster homes) that demonstrated a strong commitment to them, and utilized providers to teach youth independent living skills. Despite these strengths, more work must be done to ensure efforts toward this goal are made when it is identified as a Concurrent Goal, and in some cases further efforts to identify a committed family must be made. Additionally over the next several months, New Hampshire will be engaged in assessing any use of the APPLA goal with youth under sixteen years old and adjusting practice if needed, in accordance with the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, Public Law (P.L. 113-183).

## PERMANENCY OUTCOME #2: THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN



According to the results of the 2014/2015 Case Practice Reviews, this outcome was seventy-two percent substantially achieved and twenty-eight percent partially achieved across both Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Services. Of the eighty-nine cases in the sample none were rated as not achieved on this outcome.

Both Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Services did well in ensuring placements were in close proximity to families, as was demonstrated by Item 11 being ninety-eight percent for the combined results of the Case Practice Reviews held between June 2014 and April 2015. When placements were further away, the qualitative results of these Case Practice Reviews found that it was because children and/or youth required a specialized placement (relative, Individual Level Service Option (ISO) foster home, or residential program). In these cases, there were typically efforts by the Child Protection and/or Juvenile Justice Staff, relatives, and placement providers to assist parents in overcoming any barriers that may exist as a result of the distance of the placement.

According to the combined data for the Case Practice Reviews, eighty-two percent of children and/or youth were placed with their siblings. Data from Results Oriented Management (ROM) from June 2014 through May 22, 2015 concur with the Case Practice Review findings, in that the

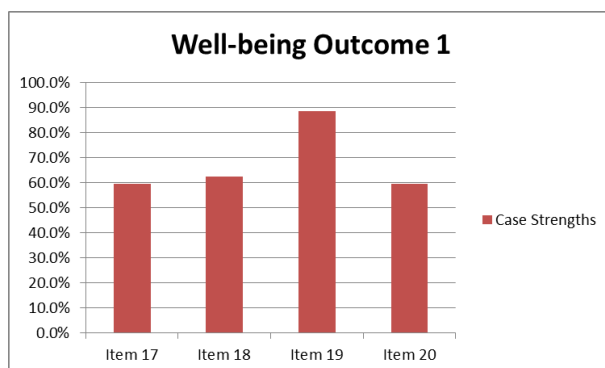
monthly percentages of children and youth placed with at least some of their siblings ranged from seventy-five to eighty-two percent. Although the data is fairly encouraging, it shows improvement can be made in this area. Qualitative data based on the results of the Case Practice Reviews demonstrated that the availability of resources (relative and foster homes) able to take larger sibling groups played a role in these numbers. Over the past year, there has been Division Administrative oversight in Child Protection Cases where siblings are not placed together.

Over the past year, there have been efforts made to assure parents maintain a relationship with their children through both visitation and other means including: being invited to medical appointments, included in extra-curricular activities, and encouraged to maintain contact such as phone calls and email. For both Item 13 (Visiting with Parents and Siblings in Placement) and Item 16 (Relationship with Parents) on the On-Site Review Instrument, seventy-five percent of cases showed strengths in these areas. Through a qualitative analysis of these results, it was found that to improve in these Items, sustained attention will need to be made to include absent and/or non-custodial parents in these efforts. As has been stated previously, this is an area of focus in each of the four office's Practice Improvement Initiatives that have been developed over the past year.

In the combined results of the Case Practice Reviews held between June 2014 and April 2015, Item 14, Preserving Connections, was a strength in New Hampshire practice with a score of ninety-three percent. Focused efforts have been made to preserve connections for youth to their extended families and community included maintaining contact with grandparents and other relatives, and continued involvement in school and extra-curricular activities. In regards to relative placements, improvement can be made in this area as the combined results showed seventy percent of cases had strengths in this area. Although efforts were made to locate relative placements, better efforts to identify both maternal and paternal relatives who may be able to be placement resources are needed prior to the children and/or youth's first placement as well as throughout the life of the case.

## Well-being

### WELL-BEING OUTCOME #1: FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN'S NEEDS

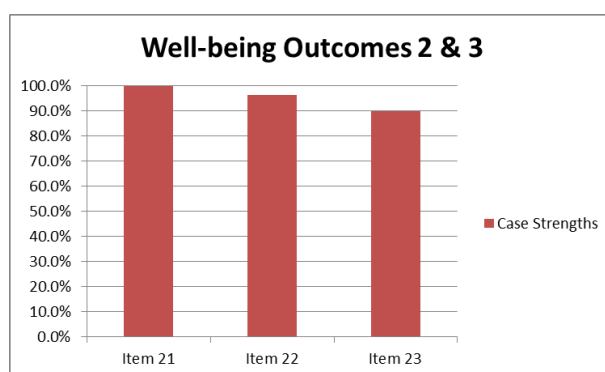


According to the results of the 2014/2015 Case Practice Reviews, this outcome was sixty percent substantially achieved, thirty-one percent partially achieved, and nine percent not achieved across both Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Services.

Although in most cases the Division did substantially or partially meet this outcome, this remains an area in need of improvement overall. The highest performance area in this outcome was in the area of worker visits with children and youth. These scores were consistent with much of the feedback obtained from interviews of parents (most often custodial parents), youth, providers, and workers during the Case Practice Review process. In fact interviews with parents and youth frequently spoke to the quality of their relationships with their workers (both Child Protective Service Workers and Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers). However, more efforts are needed to engage all children in the family and to ensure the engagement is of a quality that allows for reliable assessment of needs and involvement in case planning. It was also identified through the Case Practice Review process that improvement in assessing for needs of children, youth and parents specifically as they transition out of the state system is needed. This was especially true for youth leaving placement when they have reached the age of majority.

The biggest trend leading to scores of sixty percent for Items 17 (Needs of Child/Parent/Provider), sixty-three percent for Item 18 (Child/Family Involvement in Case Planning), and sixty percent for Item 20 (Worker Visits with Parents) can be determined through a qualitative look at the results. Challenges in these areas most commonly resulted from a lack of initial and/or concerted efforts to identify, locate, and engage absent and non-custodial parents. This is a key component of each Practice Improvement Initiative developed as a result of these Case Practice Reviews.

## WELL-BEING OUTCOMES #2 AND #3: CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL, PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS



According to the results of the 2014/2015 Case Practice Reviews, Well-Being Outcome #2 was substantially achieved one hundred percent of the time across both Child Protective Services and Juvenile Justice Services.

Juvenile Justice and Child Protective Service Cases scored perfectly in this area indicating the educational needs of children and youth across the four offices are met. These needs were routinely asked about during home visits and workers advocated with school systems to ensure

the needs of children and youth were met. Formal educational assessments and Individual Education Plans were found in the files and workers often attended educational meetings.

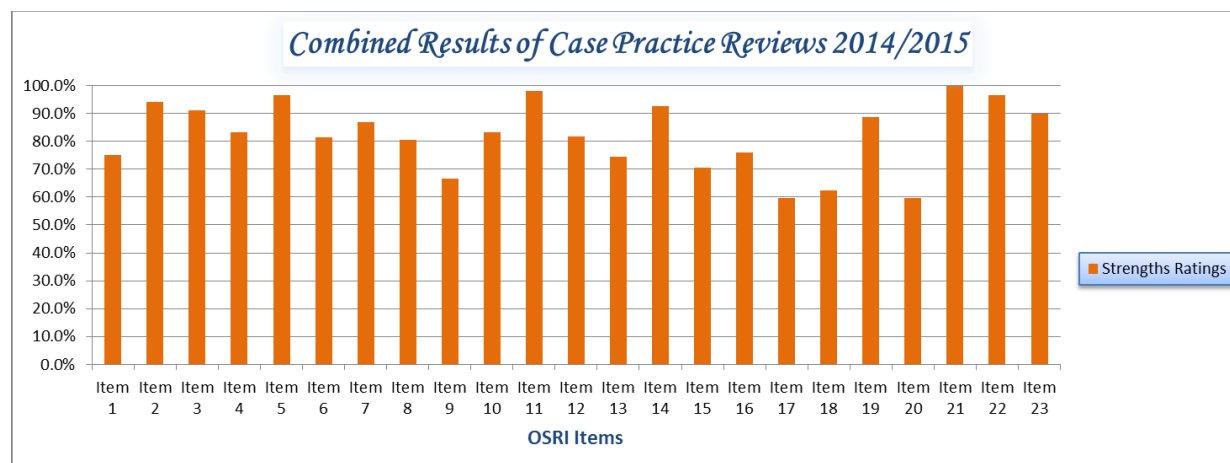
According to the combined results of the 2014/2015 Case Practice Reviews, Well-Being Outcome #3 was ninety percent substantially achieved, two percent partially achieved, and seven percent not achieved across both Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Services.

The significant majority of the children and youth that were involved with either Juvenile Justice or Child Protective Services had their physical health needs assessed and met as is indicated by a score of ninety-five percent strengths in the combined results on Item 22 for the Case Practice Reviews held between June 2014 and April 2015. Children and youth in placement routinely had physicals within thirty days of their initial placement, and received ongoing treatment for any identified needs. Children and youth living with their parents or guardians had informal assessments in that workers inquired about these needs and offered assistance if it was necessary for the case. Dental care was also routinely accessed for children and/or youth in care and supported for children and/or youth residing at home, as necessary.

Ninety percent of cases reviewed during this year were determined to have appropriate assessment of mental health needs and provision of services to meet those needs. This was achieved through routine mental health screenings when children and youth enter placement and attention to follow-up on recommendations. When mental health needs were not met, it was due to a lack of timely follow through with referrals or due to mental health services having a waiting list. Although it is not statewide at this time, Child Protective Service Workers and Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers in many offices routinely screen youth in placement and at home for trauma, and make referrals for evidence-based treatments for trauma as needed. This is a practice that will be spread statewide over the upcoming year and will be discussed further in a separate section of this report. It is anticipated that this process will further positively impact results on this Item.

Finally, in regards to positive performance on these outcomes, the policy of routinely referring children in founded reports under the age of three years-old for a developmental assessment through Early Supports and Services supported the identification of educational, medical, and/or socio-emotional needs for young children, and recommendations to meet those needs were followed.

## OSRI Item Performance, 2014-2015



## Solution Based Casework Fidelity Tool

Along with the On-Site Review Instrument, the Solution Based Casework (SBC) Fidelity Tool was utilized to evaluate every case during the Case Practice Reviews held in the Claremont, Conway, Manchester, and Concord District Offices since June of 2014. Results of the Solution Based Casework Fidelity Tool Reviews did not follow a typical pattern and actually showed strengths in different Milestones of Solution Based Casework for both Child Protection and Juvenile Justice. The results also differed among offices. This variation in results is consistent with the stage of implementation that the model is in, and supports the need for continued use of the Fidelity Tool and the inclusion of Solution Based Casework Mastery as a CFSP goal.

However, overall strengths were noted in the following areas of the model:

- Identifying high risk behaviors of youth and parents
- Identifying family supports
- Co-developing plans with families
- Celebrating successes with families

Overall opportunities for improvement were noted in the following areas:

- Tracking patterns of behavior and identifying exceptions to the problem
- Creating behavioral and measurable action plans
- Using the plan with families to track progress and make changes as necessary
- Documenting and making other parties engaged in the case planning aware of progress

## Stakeholder Survey Results

Stakeholder surveys were emailed out to professional stakeholders as part of the Case Practice Reviews held in the Claremont, Conway, Manchester and Concord District Offices over the past



year. In all, over one hundred and fifteen responses were obtained and evaluated for all of the offices. A majority of stakeholder respondents had experience working with both Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Services.

Stakeholders identified the following statewide strengths in the surveys:

- Strong relationships between the Division and the local community
- Typically strong engagement of stakeholders in work with families
- Division's commitment to maintain youth in their homes when safe to do so
- Workers develop strong relationships with youth
- Families are engaged in creating and implementing their case plans
- Case Plans identify high risk behaviors

Stakeholders identified the following statewide areas for improvement in the surveys:

- Ongoing communication with stakeholders
- Consistency in communication and practice among workers
- Family Assessment and Inclusive Reunification (FAIR) meetings could be more effective
- Youth could be better engaged in permanency and independent living

## **Parent Leader Focus Groups**

During the Case Practice Reviews conducted in two of the four offices since June 2014, Parent Leader Focus Groups were carried out. The Claremont and Conway District Offices, held earlier in this year, were in the process of forming a consistent group of parent leaders so a focus group was not possible for the review in 2014. The Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement held a focus group of five parent leaders from the Concord District Office. They stated they have felt very welcome when in the district office for meetings and this is a change from three years ago. Parent Leaders noted they would like to know there is more two way communication between the group and staff. They also mentioned a desire to see staff partner more with them around their goals and efforts as a group.

The Manchester Parent Leader focus group was attended by a relative caregiver, two foster parents and four birth parents. They shared that there has been ample opportunity for their voices to be heard, they felt strongly that staff know the strengths of parent leaders and seek out their input. When they attend staff meetings they shared that it allows parents and staff to feel good about their role and continue to share.

## **Data Indicators (previously State Profile Data)**

In FFY 2014 the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families has disposed 9,290 screened in protective reports. Of those reports, 465 (five percent) were substantiated, 8,249 (eighty-nine percent) were unsubstantiated, and 575 (six percent) fell into the category "Other"



(Source: NCANDS). Additionally, the Division has served 1,534 children in placement (Source: AFCARS). The Division for Children, Youth and Families has observed a substantial shift in the number of children served in placement as reported in AFCARS as a result of improvements made to these calculations. Specifically, this number now includes all Juvenile Justice Youth, not just Title IV-E eligible youth, and also includes children and youth on trial home visits.

On October 10, 2014, and May 13, 2015, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) published public notices in the Federal Register of statewide data indicators and national standards that the Children's Bureau (CB) will use to determine substantial conformity with Titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act through the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs). New Hampshire's most recent performance on these data indicators from May 13, 2015 is below. All risk standardized indicators were either the same as or better than the national standards.

Data Indicator	National Standard	NH Performance
Recurrence of Maltreatment	<9.1%	5.70%
Maltreatment in Foster Care	<8.50 victimizations	3.49
Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care	>40.5%	34.0-43.1%
Permanency in 12 months for children in care 12-23 months	>43.6%	32.1-43.7%
Permanency in 12 months for children in care 24 months or more	>30.3%	32.50%
Re-entry into foster care within 12 months	<8.3%	6.50%
Placement stability	<4.12 moves	3.05

## SAFETY DATA INDICATORS

### STATEWIDE DATA INDICATORS FOR CFSR SAFETY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT.

#### RECURRENCE OF MALTREATMENT

This indicator measures whether the agency was successful in preventing subsequent maltreatment of a child if the child was the subject of a substantiated or indicated report of maltreatment. The Division for Children, Youth and Families has met the national standard as 5.7 percent of all children who were victims of a substantiated maltreatment report were victims of another substantiated report during a twelve-month reporting period, less than the national standard of 9.1 percent.

#### MALTREATMENT IN FOSTER CARE

This indicator measures whether the State Child Welfare Agency ensures that children do not experience abuse or neglect while in the state's foster care system. The indicator holds states accountable for keeping children safe from harm while under the responsibility of the state, no

matter who perpetrates the maltreatment while the child is in foster care. New Hampshire has met the national standard with a performance of 3.49 victimizations per 100,000 days in foster care, less than the national standard of 8.50 victimizations.

#### STATEWIDE DATA INDICATORS FOR CFSR PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS.

##### PERMANENCY IN TWELVE MONTHS FOR CHILDREN ENTERING FOSTER CARE

This indicator measures whether the agency reunifies or places children in safe and permanent homes as soon as possible after removal, including discharges from foster care to reunification with the child's parents or primary caregivers, living with a relative, guardianship, or adoption. When the confidence interval for New Hampshire's 38.4 percent performance on this indicator is considered, New Hampshire's performance is consistent with the national standard of 40.5 percent.

##### PERMANENCY IN TWELVE MONTHS FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE TWELVE TO TWENTY-THREE MONTHS

This indicator measures whether the agency reunifies or places children in safe and permanent homes timely if permanency was not achieved in the first twelve to twenty-three months of foster care. When the confidence interval for New Hampshire's 32.2 percent to 43.7 percent performance on this indicator is considered, New Hampshire's performance is consistent with the national standard of 43.6 percent.

##### PERMANENCY IN TWELVE MONTHS FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE FOR TWENTY-FOUR MONTHS OR LONGER

This indicator measures whether the agency continues to ensure timely permanency for children who have been in foster care for longer periods of time. New Hampshire's performance on this indicator is 32.5 percent, which is consistent with the national standard of 30.3 percent.

##### RE-ENTRY TO FOSTER CARE IN TWELVE MONTHS

This indicator measures whether the agency's programs and practice are effective in supporting reunification and other permanency goals so that children do not return to foster care. New Hampshire's performance is 6.5 percent for children re-entering foster care within twelve months of discharge, which is consistent with the national standard of 8.3 percent.

##### PLACEMENT STABILITY

This indicator measures whether the agency ensures that children whom the agency removes from their homes experience stability while they are in foster care. New Hampshire has met this data indicator as children and youth have 3.05 moves per 1,000 days of foster care, less than the national standard of 4.12 moves.

Given that these new data indicators were only recently released in April 2014, New Hampshire is unable to compare recent performance directly to prior performance on them. New Hampshire is pleased that current indicators are in substantial conformity for both outcomes at this time, but intends to monitor all indicators closely, particularly the permanency in twelve months areas

which are close to the standards. The Results-Oriented Management system will provide a powerful tool for this purpose.

*Data Source: State Performance for CFSR 3 revised May2015*

## **Performance-based Standards**

In order to evaluate practice at the Sununu Youth Services Center, New Hampshire's juvenile detention and treatment facility, New Hampshire voluntarily participates in Performance-based Standards (PbS). Performance-based Standards is a model developed by the Council of Juvenile Corrections Administrators (CJCA) to evaluate best case practice standards for juvenile facilities across the country. It was developed through the PbS Learning Institute in response to an effort to improve Juvenile Justice Services through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Specifically, the Division for Children, Youth and Families collects data from youth records, youth and family exit surveys, youth and staff climate surveys, incident reports, and administrative data, and shares the data with the PbS Learning Institute. The data collected includes performance measures regarding safety, security, order, justice, programming, reintegration, health and family. This data is compiled twice yearly through the Performance-based Standards organization and results are provided to New Hampshire. Results from PbS provide a plethora of data around safety and well-being in terms of how the facility rates over time, as well as providing comparative data to over 150 other participating juvenile detention facilities. Participating juvenile facilities are compared on a four-level system. In October of 2014 the Sununu Youth Services Center programs for both Committed and Detained Youth were determined to be performing at a Level 2 of four. In April of 2015 the Sununu Youth Services Center, improved to a Level 3 for both the Committed and Detained Youth programs.

Based on the results of the PbS data, areas needing improvement are identified and a Facility Improvement Plan (FIP) created to address these areas. The Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement staff have facilitated the creation of the Facility Improvement Plan, building on input from all staff, and updating the plan with input from Supervisors and Administration over the past year.

### **SAFETY**

There are a number of means through Performance-based Standards to measure the safety of youth in the facility. Some ratings are derived from incident reports during the data collection months and other ratings are from the youth and staff surveys. Ratings over the past year indicate that the rate of assaults on committed youth within the facility has increased each data collection period, but that it remains under the national average. For detained youth, assaults on youth in October 2014 were slightly over the national average, but in April 2015 there were no assaults at all. Another important safety item tracked through looking at incident reports includes the types of interventions used by staff with youth. Specifically over the past year there have been no committed youth injured due to physical or mechanical restraints during either of the two data collection months. For detained youth, the rate of injuries to youth during restraints was above the national average during October 2014, but during April 2015 returned to the more typical ratings of having no youth injured during restraints. This is far below the national average as well.

According to parent surveys, in April of 2015 most parents believed their youth were safe within the facility. However, youth and staff surveys over the past year tell a different story. In surveys of committed youth in October 2014 and April 2014, between forty percent and thirty-eight percent (respectively) of youth reported they did not feel safe in the facility within the past six months. In surveys of detained youth in October 2014, twenty-two percent (two youth) reported they had been afraid for their safety in the previous six months, but in April of 2015 no youth indicated a feeling of fear in the facility over the previous six months. Through comparing data on assaults and injuries, it appears all injuries to youth that occurred over the past year were deemed accidental, self-inflicted, or caused by assaults by other youth in the facility. The data does not support that youth are injured by staff during restraints, and there were zero founded cases of child abuse and/or neglect within the facility over the past year. Based on this information, the Facility Improvement Plan focuses on assuring safety through improved and consistent use of de-escalation and behavior management techniques.

Another important data point is staff report of fear for their safety at the facility in the previous six months. In April 2015, forty-six percent of staff reported feeling unsafe in the facility over the past six months, which was down from sixty-three percent during the October 2014 data collection month. Although this trend demonstrates fewer staff feel the facility is dangerous for them over the past six months, the trend for this year is that more staff reported fear this year compared with the prior year, and that scores around staff fear remained higher than the national average. These reports are in contrast to the decreasing numbers of assaults and restraints in the facility. Through meetings with both administrative and direct line staff, as well as an independent review, it was found that a large contributing factor to this rating was that as the use of consequences has changed within the facility (using restorative justice practices and limiting room confinement), staff feel more frequently that youth are not held accountable for their actions and, therefore, feel less safe. There are a number of initiatives underway in the facility to address this. Also, it is reported that more gang activity has been experienced during the past year within the facility, which is also impacting the seriousness of the assaults and, thus, may be impacting the sense of safety.

Based on this data, the Facility Improvement Plan developed and implemented with the facility had a number of items aimed at increasing safety in the facility through managing the culture and clarifying rules and expectations for behavior management.

## PERMANENCY

Parents of youth exiting the Sununu Youth Services Center between May 1, 2014 and April 30, 2015 were surveyed. It was remarkable that ninety-eight percent of parents of committed youth who had been discharged during this time had visited with their youth and seventy percent of those felt they had adequate time to visit with their children. These same parents reported that ninety-four percent of the time they were engaged in their youth's treatment planning process and agreed with the goals. Parents have also consistently reported that they were kept apprised of their youth's progress with the educational and clinical goals in their treatment plan. In addition, ninety-eight percent of parents of committed youth over the past year stated they were involved and agreed with the discharge plan for their youth.

The Sununu Youth Services Center has focused on permanency for youth over the past couple of years. To facilitate this, a Permanency Program Specialist and Adolescent Program Specialist have been hired to work with youth on identifying and meeting goals for when they are discharged from the facility.

## WELL-BEING

Performance-based Standards provides an opportunity to look at programming and treatment services provided for youth, including how needs for youth are identified and treatment provided to meet those needs. Although scores vary across disciplines (educational, medical and clinical/therapeutic) and time period being evaluated, overall results indicate that the Sununu Youth Services Center provides quality programming that meets youth's needs. However, there are a number of areas where improvement opportunities exist. First, youth records for committed youth who were discharged between May 1, 2014 and April 30, 2015 demonstrate a decline from ninety-eight percent to eighty-five percent in the number of youth who received educational programming as specified in their treatment plan. In addition, psycho-social programming was provided for slightly fewer children over the past year compared to the prior year. However, this overall score remains higher than the national average. Since April of 2013, during every data draw there has been a consistent increase in the percentage of youth (from seventy-eight percent to eighty-eight percent) who have been discharged at a higher level of privileges than when they entered the facility.

Notably, most youth report feeling that the programming (treatment planning and service provision) helps inform them of what they need to do once they leave the Sununu Youth Services Center. Between May 1, 2014 and April 30, 2015, eighty-nine percent of committed youth discharged reported they had met most or all of their treatment goals.

Through the Facility Improvement Plan, there are a number of objectives to improve the well-being of youth committed and detained at the Sununu Youth Services Center. There are objectives to increase the engagement of youth and families with treatment planning as well as to assure that treatment plan goals are based on assessments conducted on the various areas of well-being. In addition, there is an objective to increase trauma work in the facility to better meet the treatment needs of youth.

## SYSTEMIC FACTORS

### Information System

New Hampshire Bridges is the Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System of record. All required information is recorded in this application. The system is actively used by all case carrying staff and their supervisors, as well as administrative staff.

New Hampshire understands that Bridges is the principle tool to aid management in monitoring practice and is therefore a key to improving service delivery and practice. Thus, the DCYF

management uses data from this automated system to augment case management, workload management, planning, and budgeting and resource management.

Bridges can identify the status, demographic characteristics, case plan goals, and location of every child in foster care, including the actual address as well as the placement agency.

Bridges screen prints showing examples of the above are as follows:

The below screen print shows the County, Race, and Hispanic Ethnicity application entries:

[Read Only] - Client Information

Information | Summary | Address | Phone | AKA | Marital | Characteristics | Abs. Parent | Photos

Legally Liable County: Merrimack

D.O.: Nashua

☐ SSN Verified ☐ Need Interpreter

**Ethnicity (Check all that apply)**

- ☒ American Indian/Alaskan Native
- ☒ Asian
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- ☒ White
- ☐ Unable to Determine
- ☐ Declined

Hispanic Origin: No

**Tribe**

Primary:

Secondary:

CDIB: Verified Date: 00/00/0000

How Verified:

Birthplace:

Email Address...

Imminent Risk...

The below screen print shows the Legal Status with drop down open:

Administrative/Legal Status

**Child's Legal Relationship with DHHS Information**

Legal Status	Begin Date	End Date
Custody	11/25/2013	00/00/0000

**Child's Legal Relationship with DHHS Details**

Begin Date: 11/25/2013 End Date: 00/00/0000

Legal Status: Custody

- Custody
- Conditional Release
- Detention
- Guardianship
- Interstate Compact
- Legal Supervision



The below screen is an example of the case plan goals:

Case Permanency Plan

**Case Plan History**

Creation Date	Court Decision
01/14/2015	Approved
11/25/2013	Unknown

Plan Creation Date: 01/14/2015 Estimated Plan Completion Date: 06/30/2015

Date Parent(s) Signed: 00/00/0000 Date of Next Court Hearing: 00/00/0000

Reason For Update:  Date Judge Signed: 00/00/0000

Family Situation:

**Case Permanency Plan**

Child	Permanency Plan	Family Visit
BROOK	Adoption	Monthly

**Concurrent Case Permanency Plan**

Child	Concurrent Permanency Plan
BROOK	Return Home (Reunification)

**Additional Information**

Recommendations to the Court

Court Decision: ☒ Approved ☐ Modified ☐ Not Applicable ☐ Unknown

Court Decision Comments

Buttons: Add, Change, Delete, Clear, Cancel, Select...

The below screen shows the location of child in placement:

(Read only) Placement History - BROOK

Removal | Svc Auth | Unpaid Plcmnt | Plcmnt Hist | Trial Visits | Med/Non Med Auths | ASFA

**Placement History**

Entry Date	Exit Date	Type Of Care	Resource Name	Resource ID	Resource
01/07/2015	00/00/0000	General Foster Home	JOSH	94059	
11/25/2013	01/07/2015	Relative's Home	ELAINE	--	

**Placement Details**

Placement Entry:

Date: 01/07/2015 Time:  ☐ a.m. ☐ p.m.

Placement Exit:

Date: 00/00/0000 Time:  ☐ a.m. ☐ p.m.

Reason:

Type Of Care: General Foster Home

The below screen shows the Agency (ISO) with the actual foster home name and address:

(Read only) Placement History - KATIA

Removal | Svc Auth | Unpaid Plcmt | Plcmt Hist | Trial Visits | Med/Non Med Auths | ASFA

**Placement History**

Entry Date	Exit Date	Type Of Care	Resource Name	Resource ID	Resource
03/27/2015	00/00/0000	General Foster Home			
01/21/2015	03/27/2015	Intermediate Group Home (Level 1)			
05/09/2014	01/21/2015	Intensive Group Home / Ed Fac			
04/29/2014	05/09/2014	Hospital Stay			
04/25/2014	04/29/2014	Hospital Stay			
01/31/2014	04/25/2014	Individual Service Option			
11/08/2013	01/31/2014	Individual Service Option			

**Placement Details**

Placement Entry:

Date: 01/31/2014 Time: ☐ a.m. ☐ p.m.

Type Of Care: Individual Service Option

**Resource Details**

Name

Resource ID: 88229 Type of Care: Individual Service Option

Agency:

First: GLORIA Middle: Last:

Telephone Number: (603)820-1641

Address

Manchester New Hampshire 03103

County: Hillsborough

Close

Help

The below screen shows indication if the child has disabilities:

Svc/Auth - HEATHER

Removal | Svc Auth | Unpaid Plcmt | Plcmt Hist | Trial Visits | Med/Non Med Auths | ASFA

**Removals**

Date Removed	Contrary/Welfare	Removal End Date
05/24/2007	05/23/2007	00/00/0000
11/07/2005	11/07/2005	11/10/2006

ICWA Applies: No

Conditions

CHINS

Select...

Relatives Considered for Placement? Yes, no relative available

Contrary to the Welfare: Yes, Document Submitted 05/23/2007 Verified

**Removal Context**

Child Removed From: Parents (Both)

Type of Removal: Court-Ordered

Caretaker Family Structure: Married Couple

Child Diagnosed with Disability: Yes

Reason for Removal: No

Not yet determined



The below screen shows indication of what type disability the child has, the begin date as diagnosed and if it is a valid Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS) selection:

Characteristic	Start Date	End Date	AFCARS	Specifics
ADD with Hyperactivity (ADHD)	04/01/2015	00/00/0000	Y	
Medication Required	00/00/0000	00/00/0000	N	
Other(Specific)	00/00/0000	00/00/0000	N	Anxiety
Specific Learning Disability	04/01/2015	00/00/0000	Y	
Wears/Needs Glasses	00/00/0000	00/00/0000	N	

Other benefits of the system identified by stakeholders include the following: The system provides immediate access to information on a statewide basis:

- A web-based provider billing portal has been implemented to improve the payment process for providers who care for the children and families of New Hampshire;
- Two new structured risk and safety assessment tools have been implemented in the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) to assist CPSWs and JPPOs develop case plans to improve outcomes and safety for the children who they serve;
- The information is available for children that are in “unpaid” (i.e., unlicensed relative care) as well as “paid” placements;
- The system includes ticklers for administrative reviews and permanency hearings; and
- Recent modifications to Bridges to address many past concerns have made it more user-friendly.

On November 13, 2008 the State received a letter from ACF regarding the final determination of the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System review. ACF noted that the Bridges Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System is fully compliant with Federal SACWIS requirements. These requirements included the system’s ability to identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or within the immediately preceding twelve months, has been) in foster care.

## COURTSTREAM

CourtStream is a web-based information system with many capabilities that are very well suited for the needs of a facility such as the Sununu Youth Services Center (SYSC). The system has the capacity to track a number of critical functions for a variety of individual client and facility needs. For example, the Clients area contains the list of all youth currently in care at Sununu Youth Services Center, and can be edited by the user to show all youth separated by housing unit, by last name etc. This section also shows the current level and status of all youth at the center. Additionally, staff are able to capture each individual youth's progress in treatment and any behavioral or safety incidents.

CourtStream also allows staff to keep a real time running log of all activities/events occurring in the facility through use of the Daily Log. This log gives the Division the ability to know exactly where all youth in the facility are located on and off grounds for safety and security reasons and court appointments etc. at any given time.

One of the most valuable functions of this system is the ability to send alerts with any of the above-mentioned reports. Alerts can be sent to any registered CourtStream user in the state with a single click, so that staff throughout the facility involved in various aspects of the youth's programming can be kept immediately apprised of any progress or issues. Additionally, Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers in the field were given read-only access to the system in 2013 and trained in its usage, and Child Protective Service Workers were given access in 2014. Due to Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers and Child Protective Service Workers being registered CourtStream users, they are now alerted via email within minutes of the report being generated each time a youth on their caseload makes progress, has a minor setback or a major incident. This communication capability allows for increased communication between facility and field staff in that it makes it nearly effortless.

## DATA CONSIDERATIONS

The Bridges user community has been deriving assessment information from the Bridges Enterprise Data Warehouse on a regular basis to support field and management assessment decision-making. The Enterprise Data Warehouse is populated via the Bridges System on a nightly basis. Since Bridges is the SACWIS (Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System), it will capture, store and display eligibility results including clients' individual eligibility history. Also, due to enhancements of Title IV-E determination results, the Division for Children, Youth and Families will be able to report and analyze trends with greater accuracy. Two Federal Reporting projects are vital to the data for the CFSR and State Data profile. The two projects, AFCARS and NCANDS are outlined below.

Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) Assessment Reviews are conducted in order to verify the State information system's capability to collect, extract and transmit AFCARS data accurately in accordance with "The Federal regulations and ACF's policies."<sup>1</sup> The submission of this data is also a requirement of the Statewide Automated Child

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<sup>1</sup> Excerpted from the USDHHS/ACF/ACYF/Children's Bureau, State Guide to an AFCARS Assessment Review dated December 2003.

Welfare Information System (SACWIS) compliance. AFCARS regulations are found at 45 CFR 1355.40 and provide the guidelines for collection of uniform and reliable information on children who are under the placement and care responsibility of the State's Title IV-B and Title IV-E agency and children adopted under the auspices of the State public Child Welfare Agency. States failing to meet the standards detailed in 45 CFR 1355.40(a-d) are considered out of compliance with Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System requirements. The AFCARS extract program has been rewritten to ensure an updated criterion is incorporated due to system changes throughout the past few years. Along with that, some changes and enhancements were made in accordance to an AIP (AFCARS Improvement Plan). New Hampshire is currently going through a revamped AIP and will be implementing changes and enhancements as directed by the revamped AIP. Some changes to the Bridges system will include trial home visit application changes that will enable staff to better indicate the trial home visit data. Another change will better define relative relations and retrieve the relative demographics.

New Hampshire passes the AFCARS compliance checks. Below are the child demographics compliance percentages for AFCARS Elements six through seventeen for the latest submission at this time of October 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015:

**Date of Birth** (*Element 6*): 100 percent compliant

**Sex** (*Element 7*): 100 percent compliant

**Race** (*Element 8*): 1.9 percent Missing Data

**Hispanic Ethnicity** (*Element 9*): 100 percent compliant

**Diagnosed with Disability** (*Element 10*): 0.09 percent Missing Data

**Disability Types** (*Elements 11-15*): 100 percent compliant

**Has Child Been Adopted** (*Element 16*): 1.38 percent Internal Consistency Error

**If Yes, How Old** (*Element 17*): 1.38 Internal Consistency Error

In calendar year 2014, Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System reported a total of approximately 26,500 children were served by the Division for Children, Youth and Families. There were 3,443 open for Juvenile Justice Services Cases and 2,241 open Children, Youth and Families Cases.

National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) is a national data collection and analysis system created in response to the requirements of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (Public Law 93-247) as amended. This data is input for the Child and Family Service Review. The report extract must be corrected to provide accurate data.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families completed a major re-write of the NCANDS process for New Hampshire. This allowed the state to include four new federally-required elements, and to make extensive updates to the extract file. As a result, the number of validation errors in the FFY 2014 report will be greatly reduced: only about two and a half percent of records will have an error in one of the 150 elements. The vast majority of those errors occur in one of the new elements – Investigation Start Time. The Division has identified possible edits to the investigation start time field in the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System, which could reduce the overall error rate to close to zero.

In June 2015, the Division received approval from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on DCYF's AFCARS Improvement Plan. This approval was based on a result of an AFCARS assessment review and noted the extensive work done by the Division's Bureau of Information Systems. In the long-term this achievement will improve the integrity and accuracy of the data being provided to ACF.

### QUALITY ASSURANCE

The State plans to use both the Data Quality Utility and the Frequency Utility in efforts to ensure better AFCARS file integrity. With the new Apex application, the AFCARS file can be run from either October or April for up to six months which provides the opportunity to check the file on a continual six month basis until submission for that selected report period.

In addition, the State is developing other techniques for monitoring the accuracy and timeliness of data entry. It plans to continue to enhance monitoring analysis by utilizing a variety of queries to interrogate the data for quality improvement opportunities.

An example of ongoing monitoring techniques is the isolation and correction of data entry errors improving the data integrity. Other future enhancement opportunities have been identified in the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System through AFCARS data analysis to include improved tracking of "Relative Placements" and "Trial Home Visits".

### STRENGTHS

New Hampshire Bridges provides a series of screens, which guide Intake Workers and Supervisors through the process of collecting basic information about reporters, subject families, and allegations, as well as recording contacts with collateral parties. The system guides staff through the process of accepting a referral for further assessment or recording the reasons a referral is not accepted. Finally, the Central Intake Supervisor uses the system to transfer the referral to a local district office for further assessment. The system keeps a log of all contacts and transfers, as well as providing a utility for freezing the information recorded in the system at the point that key decisions are made. All children under care are recorded and tracked in the New Hampshire Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System application. Since New Hampshire Bridges is fully compliant with ACF as a Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System, it is the system of record and there are no other alternative systems for tracking children. For example, children in different geographical areas throughout the State or for different groups in out-of-home care are recorded and tracked through the same system.

New Hampshire Bridges provides for a case planning process, including a family services planner. In addition, there is a separate placement planning process to specify the placement plans for children placed out of their homes. This process begins with an assessment of needs and strengths of the child and the family, and proceeds through setting goals and determining services needed to reach goals. The planning process then feeds into a service authorization process, which allows the worker to match the child to needed services (based on child and service provider characteristics). Supervisory approvals are required at various points along the way. Should legal action be required as part of the case plan, New Hampshire Bridges provides

for tracking that process as well. The following projects are examples of recent enhancements to the New Hampshire Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System.

**Juvenile Justice Risk Assessment:** This project is for a computerized upgrade of the current assessment and outcomes process for Juvenile Justice Services. Specifically, request is for a computer-programmed algorithm of data analysis that would be based on the Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth (SAVRY) model. The SAVRY form will include a design of the user interface in Bridges, based on several questionnaires.

**Solution Based Casework Case Plan:** This project is to support the Division's Practice of Solution Based Casework. The current Report Templates that exist in New Hampshire Bridges need to be replaced with the revised case plan forms and the new case plan form and instructions need to be added to the Report Templates. As they are created, the documents need to continue to be stored in the Case Library, as is the current practice in New Hampshire Bridges. The associated instructions with this project will be provided to Division staff on how to complete and store the case plan.

**New Hampshire Integrated Assessment (NHIA):** The Division began utilizing Structured Decision-Making (SDM) in 2001. Structured Decision-Making was embedded into New Hampshire Bridges; via Structured Decision-Making tools and forms that help guide Child Protective Service Worker's (CPSW) decision at key critical decision points throughout the life of a referral or a case. After ten years of use, SDM needed to be revamped to meld SDM, Signs of Safety, and Solution Based Casework into one tool. The new assessment tool, New Hampshire Integrated Assessment (NHIA) Model has evolved as the Division's primary strategy to ensure that accurate, timely, and ongoing safety and risk assessment tools are utilized statewide in Child Protection to guide case decisions and engage families in a meaningful way.

**National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD):** The NYTD process will be modified to more accurately identify the baseline and follow-up populations. The new method allows for the reality that NYTD surveys may be entered into the system sometime after the 45<sup>th</sup> day, and uses the surveys save event as a trigger to evaluate the client for inclusion in the baseline and follow-up populations. This project will be completed during the FFY 2015.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Bridges has been fully compliant with federal requirements since 2009. However, the system has been in production for twelve years and at some point will require a "re-platforming" of the application. One objective would be to take advantage of more modern technology for a mobile work force. Utilizing the State's new financial system for provider billing could be another opportunity for improvement. The existing Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System could be streamlined if claims processing in Bridges are moved to a central financial system.

Additionally, field staff often report concerns with certain aspects of Bridges. While Bridges is fully compliant and performs all tasks necessary to complete job function, many of the Division's field staff are technologically savvy and express their frustrations with how long Bridges modifications and upgrades can take to complete compared to other forms of modern

technology. Bridges modifications are conducted every six months through new Bridges releases. Additionally, maintenance can be done off-cycle during the year for changes that do not require a full release.

### SOURCES OF DATA ON CHILD MALTREATMENT DEATHS

The response below was developed in collaboration with New Hampshire's NCANDS contact and is taken from New Hampshire's State Commentary Template for FFY 2014:

#### SOURCES

Data for the Agency File were obtained from the New Hampshire Department of Justice as well as the New Hampshire Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (New Hampshire Bridges).

There is no use of "other" with regard to fatalities. The State reports fatalities (unduplicated) in both the Division and Child files.

### Case Review System

One of the Divisions for Children, Youth and Families' principle Beliefs is that permanency planning for children and youth should begin at the time of removal and continue until a permanency plan is achieved. Engaging families and youth in decisions about permanency, safety and well-being increases the likelihood of a successful permanent plan through a process that builds trust and embraces transparency. Over the past four years the development of the New Hampshire Practice Model included implementation of family engagement strategies aimed at assuring that family and youth voice were included in the development of case plans goals and identification of actions to achieve those goals. To accomplish this, the Division revised case plan tools to incorporate the key concepts of Solution Based Casework in the work with families. This included comprehensive revision to the case plans to be completed with parents involved with the Division due to a finding of abuse and neglect. These changes were fully incorporated into the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System in Bridges in August 2014. As a result of Dana Christensen's Solution Based Casework "refresher" training Division Staff received in January 2015, further revisions were made to the Juvenile Justice Community Supervision Plan and Placement Plan. This was done with the intention of assuring that families were actively engaged in the development of the case plans and that the parents and youth were fully aware of the tasks that needed to be completed in order to achieve best outcomes towards permanency.

In recognition of the significant impact the application of Solution Based Casework would have on family engagement, the Division has made a concerted effort to establish a rigorous case review system designed to function in such a way as to verify that there is consistent, ongoing, and sustained attention to achieving timely permanency for all children, youth and families involved with Child Protection and Juvenile Justice Field Services. Of particular importance in conducting case reviews is determining if field staff are focusing on inclusion of parent and youth voice in the development of case plans and that services and supports are being provided



to help the families build competence in their ability to manage situations that are difficult for them.

Written case plans are to be developed within sixty days of the date a child is removed from the home. In Child Protection cases these plans are developed jointly with the parents and are to be updated every six months. The case plan is signed by the parents and child/youth when age appropriate. For Juvenile Justice Cases the Community Supervision or Placement Plan are also developed in collaboration with the youth and the parent. For Child Protection and Juvenile Justice Cases, the supervisor reviews and sign off on the completed plan. It is expected these plans are reviewed regularly with the family and updated every six months. Field Staff are expected to document that the case planning process includes ongoing conversations with the family regarding the sequence of events that led to the Division's involvement with the family and identification of Individual and Family Level Objectives that can improve family functioning and ultimately assure child safety.

In Calendar Year 2014, 1543 Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Cases opened that required the completion of a case plan. According to Bridges, of the 1543 cases opened, 280 have at least one case plan documented in Bridges. This is eighteen percent of the new cases opened. For the cases with a documented case plan in Bridges, the average number of case plans completed for the case was three. Child Protective Services had a case plan documented in 230 out of 295 cases opened in 2014, or seventy-eight percent, while Juvenile Justice had 50 out of 1248, or four percent of cases opened in 2014. Of the 280 cases with case plans in Bridges, fifty-one percent were completed within sixty days of the case opening. Juvenile Justice Services created new case plans that are not in Bridges currently, which could account for the low percentage of case plans completed and documented in Bridges. It should also be taken into account that the number of new cases accounts for all cases that were opened in Bridges no matter the outcome of the case (i.e. petition withdrawn, case dismissed, etc.) These instances would typically not require a case plan to be completed, but impact the percentages listed above. There is further support that greater than four percent of Juvenile Justice Services Cases that opened in 2014 had a case plan completed. As stated earlier in the report, the data from the 2014/2015 DCYF Case Practice Reviews indicated that in sixty-three percent of cases reviewed, Item 18 (Child/Family Involvement in Case Planning) was rated as a strength. This is inclusive of both Child Protective Services and Juvenile Justice Services Cases. Over the coming year, the Division will continue to focus on improving the outcomes for Item 18. Improvement in this area will indicate both an increase in completion of case plans and improvement in the quality of the case plans being completed.

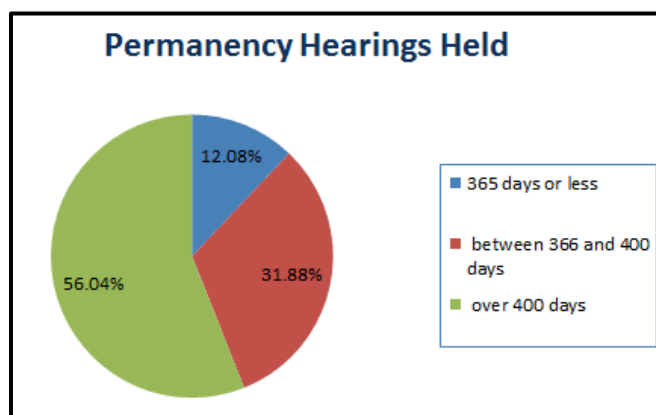
New Hampshire has incorporated an administrative case review process for placement cases that is specifically aimed at assuring the question "can this child/youth be safely returned home" is at the forefront of every meeting. Family Assessment Inclusive Reunification (FAIR) Meetings include a review of the status of the case, the case plan, the child/youth's safety, well-being, and plans for permanency. These meetings are held within specific timeframes and are facilitated by an objective party whose primary role is to create a forum for family engagement, where families are active participants and have a voice in their case planning, permanency planning, and case progress. While Family Assessment Inclusive Reunification is specific to Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Placement Cases, New Hampshire has also incorporated a similar process to assure periodic and ongoing review of in-home cases through the utilization of "Solution Based

Family Meetings” (Solution Based Family Meetings). These meetings are designed to address with the family what is working, what is not working, determine how the Division can be of assistance in addressing the family’s needs, and establishing a detailed plan of actions/goals that include behaviorally specific tasks to accomplish the goals. Once the plan is established SBFMs are to be scheduled at the four month, ten month and every six months thereafter throughout the life of the case. Focus of the meetings is to be on reviewing the status of the case plan including how the family is managing continued safety, finding and maintaining family and/or community supports and resources, and updating the plan as needed to celebrate accomplishments and review tasks that still need to be accomplished.

In Calendar Year 2014, 1446 Family Assessment Inclusive Reunification (FAIR) Meetings were held for Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Placement Cases. This involved 859 cases, therefore each case average 1.68 FAIR Meetings. The median amount of FAIR Meetings held was two. According to the May 2015 FAIR Monthly Report, fifty-eight percent of mothers attended the most recent FAIR Meeting. Twenty-six percent of fathers attended their most recent FAIR Meeting. Nineteen percent of youth attended their most recent FAIR Meeting. When only factoring in cases with a permanency goal of reunification, sixty-seven percent of mothers attended their most recent FAIR Meeting, while thirty percent of fathers attended their most recent FAIR Meeting. For cases with a permanency goal of APPLA, thirty percent of children and youth attended their FAIR Meeting. This data supports the belief that mothers and fathers are going to be more involved in FAIR Meetings with the permanency goal of reunification and likewise children and youth with the permanency goal of APPLA.

Child Protective cases that are court involved have regularly scheduled court review hearings that occur at the three, six and nine month mark following the dispositional hearing with a permanency hearing held at twelve months. To assure Permanency Hearings occur timely the date of these hearings are most often scheduled at the onset of placement. Subsequent to the twelve month permanency hearing, periodic reviews continue every three months thereafter pending the final achievement of permanency for the child or youth. Juvenile Justice Cases are heard at least every six months unless there is cause to bring forward a review hearing prior to that.

The chart below illustrates that timeframes of Permanency Hearings held for children and youth that were removed by Child Protective Service in Calendar Year 2012 and did not achieve permanency within the first 365 days of placement.





With the implementation of “Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement Protocols” in three district offices and four Family Division Circuit Courts, the Division for Children, Youth and Families has created a new court report specific to youth in open cases with the goal of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement. The Division, in collaboration with the Model Court Project, has been actively working to prepare for the statewide roll-out of the “Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement Protocols”. This will occur after a statewide training in October 2015. It is expected that the court will guarantee there is sufficient inquiry during the review hearing of these cases on whether or not the youth has a primary caring adult or what efforts need to be made to get one. Additionally, sufficient inquiry will occur to determine that the Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement permanency plans are meaningful and planned and address the well-being of every youth involved, including a youth’s education, healthcare, potential employment, and living arrangements.

In addition to the formal FAIR, Solution Based Family Meetings, and the court review process discussed above, periodic reviews of case plan goals, tasks and achievement of goals also take place at treatment team meetings, during Solution Based Casework Case Consultations, at internal Permanency Planning Team (PPT) meetings and in Child Protection Cases, at the time of transferring a case from Assessment to Family Services.

According to Bridges, in Calendar Year 2014, 1126 Permanency Planning Team (PPT) Meetings were held and documented in Bridges. This data consists of 690 children and youth involved in 503 cases. Twenty-six of the Permanency Planning Team Meetings were held regarding twenty Juvenile Justice Youth. 1.6 Permanency Planning Team Meetings were held per child/youth that had a Permanency Planning Team Meeting in 2014. There were 649 Child Protective Services Children/Youth in placement at the end of 2014. Based on this number, nearly ninety-seven percent of Child Protective Services Children/Youth had at least one Permanency Planning Team during 2014.

When Termination of Parental Rights is the recommended goal at the Permanency Hearing it is expected that Child Protective Services will file the required Termination of Parental Rights packet timely. Although the new Adoption and Termination of Parental Rights protocols developed by the Court Improvement Project and piloted in the Concord and Franklin Family Courts in 2010 have not been adopted statewide, it is consistent practice in most district offices that the Termination of Parental Rights packet is ready to file at the time of the permanency hearing. Upon receipt of the court order it is expected the packet will be filed within thirty to sixty days.

According to Result Oriented Management and Bridges, in Calendar Year 2012 Child Protective Services removed 398 children and youth from their homes. Ninety-three of those children and youth had documentation in Bridges of termination of parental rights petition being filed with the court. Of the ninety-three children and youth, forty-seven percent of the petitions were filed within fifteen months of the child or youth’s removal from the home. The remaining fifty-three percent of the petitions exceeded the fifteen month mark.

To assure foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care are notified of, and have a right to be heard in any review or hearing held with respect to a child or youth in their care, in 2012 the Division established guidelines for staff on how this was to

occur. A written Notification of Hearing letter is to be sent to these caregivers and it is expected that staff will document in Bridges that this has been done.

Notice of Hearings is tracked via a statement “Hearing Notice Sent” entered in the first line of a case contact in Bridges. In SFY 12, 292 (44.9 percent) hearing notices were sent on open foster care and relative placement cases; in SFY 13, 447 (69.41 percent) and in SFY 14, 409 (72.39 percent). The most current data, according to Bridges, indicates there were 215 new Child Protective Placement Cases in Calendar Year 2014. Of those cases, 192 involved a placement in foster or relative care. Hearing notices were sent on seventy-seven of those cases, which an average of three notices sent per case. Therefore, forty percent of the placement cases, with a placement in relative or foster care at any point since the case opened in 2014, have documentation of sending notification of hearing to the foster or relative caregiver. At a recent Leadership Meeting, the consensus among district office supervisors was that the hearing notices are being sent and/or delivered to the foster or relative caregiver and data entry into Bridges is most likely the reason for the lower percentage of compliance. Furthermore, action has been completed in the past year to have “Hearing Notice Sent” added to the pick list under purpose of a contact. This has enabled the data query to be run more efficiently.

As stated throughout this document the advent of Solution Based Casework resulted in significant changes to the case planning process that is moving the Division to a foundation of work with families designed to be more engaging and inclusive. Changes were made to the case plan that reflects Solution Based Casework Principles. As part of the Division’s Quality Assurance System, Case Practice Reviews occur on-site in district offices. These include a file review to determine if there is a written case plan signed by the parents in the case file, documentation of the extent to which the parents are involved in case planning and when possible, a face-to-face interview is scheduled with the parent(s) to further assess their involvement in developing the case plan goals/objectives and tasks. The results of these reviews are shared with the district office supervisors and staff and Practice Improvement Initiatives (PIIs) are developed at the local level. These Practice Improvement Initiatives focus on case planning and inclusion of family voice when this is identified as an area needing improvement and improvement outcomes are monitored by district office supervisors and administrators on a monthly basis.

## STRENGTHS AND CONCERNS

Case Practice Reviews demonstrate that the Division for Children, Youth and Families Staff are committed to the application and integration of Solution Based Casework in their interaction and intervention with families. Internally case consultations are held on a regular basis and the Division has the capacity to track quantitative data related to number of FAIR and Solution Based Family Meeting meetings held with families. The Case Practice Review Process provides greater qualitative information as to how families experience Division involvement through the stakeholder interview process.

Although the Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) packet is filed with the courts within thirty to sixty days of the court’s permanency order, scheduling of the initial TPR hearing and subsequent trial is frequently delayed for an extended period of time. While some courts are able to schedule the initial hearing within ninety days, most offices report that the initial hearing is not

scheduled for at least six months, and in some instances even later. This is a systemic issue that the Division has and will continue to address. The opportunity has presented itself through continued work with the Court Improvement Project. The Division for Children, Youth and Families will work with the Court Improvement Project to bring forward the permanency protocols statewide once the roll-out of the “Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement protocols” are finalized in late 2015.

In addition the SACWIS does not allow for ready access to data that indicates TPRs were filed timely. This will likely require development of a Bridges change request and a detailed business requirements document to be completed in order for the programmers to make the necessary changes to New Hampshire Bridges so that this data can be routinely obtained in the future.

## **Quality Assurance Systems**

### **CASE PRACTICE REVIEWS**

The Division’s Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement (BOLQI) is responsible for the statewide quality assurance and improvement process. Oversight of state quality improvement processes includes data collection, research and analysis, program improvement and training.

A major component of performance measurement and accountability in New Hampshire is the Case Practice Review (CPR) process. The Administration for Children and Families’ CFSR framework and the On-Site Review Instrument (OSRI) drive New Hampshire Case Practice Review’s. In 2015 the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement chose not to use the Round Three OSRI in Case Practice Reviews until all quality assurance staff had an opportunity to be trained and practiced on the new tool. In addition to the OSRI, the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement uses the Solution Based Casework (SBC) Fidelity Review Instrument to measure and sustain the accurate usage of the Solution Based Casework Model at district office Case Practice Reviews. All cases selected for a Case Practice Review undergo a Solution Based Casework Fidelity Review.

Case Practice Reviews are conducted on-site at the Division’s district offices unless the physical location cannot support the review equipment and staff. The Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement use a random case sample process that is stratified in the same manner as they are for a Child and Family Services Review. In-home and placement cases are reviewed for both Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Services. Since June 2014 Case Practice Reviews have been conducted in four district offices including the metropolitan site which is reviewed annually. A total of ninety cases have been reviewed from the Claremont, Conway, Concord and Manchester Offices. One case out of the Conway District Office was not included in the results for quality assurance reasons.

Reviewer pairs are selected from field and administrative staff across the state, and are intentionally selected to ensure the teams are made up of a majority of experienced reviewers and a smaller number of new reviewers. As a result, New Hampshire is able to reap the benefits of training from a peer review process while still ensuring accurate and consistent review results. In order to ensure the integrity of the Case Practice Review process, reviewers must disclose any

conflict of interest that they may have between their role as a reviewer and their employment and/or knowledge of/involvement with the parties of the cases under review. If a reviewer identifies a conflict they will either be reassigned a different case or replaced by an alternate reviewer.

The Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement have developed a comprehensive and consistent Quality Assurance (QA) Process for Case Practice Reviews, drawing from a consistent pool of trained Quality Assurance Staff. Prior to a review week a mandatory Case Practice Review/Quality Assurance Training is conducted by a core team of Bureau Staff for all review team staff including quality assurance. Each team has one Quality Assurance Staff identified to assist them throughout the week for consistency. A second level of quality assurance is conducted on both the OSRI and the Solution Based Casework Fidelity Tool to check for accuracy in ratings and ensure all initial Quality Assurance issues were addressed. Post review, more levels of Quality Assurance are completed to ensure accuracy and consistency before and after data are entered into the database. Any Quality Assurance questions/issues identified during a Case Practice Review are incorporated in the training held for reviewers prior to the next Case Practice Review.

An exit conference is held with all district office staff following the Case Practice Review where Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement Staff share all data and results from the review. This data includes the results from the OSRI, the Solution Based Casework Fidelity Tool, stakeholder survey, and incorporating feedback from reviewers during debrief sessions as well.

### PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES (PIIs)

In order to facilitate Continuous Quality Improvement and address specific areas needing improvement identified through the Case Practice Review in each district office, the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement has assisted the district office staff with the development of Practice Improvement Initiatives (PIIs) in each office that has had a Case Practice Review since the federal CFSR in 2010. The Practice Improvement Initiative process was redesigned at that time to draw upon several methodologies and philosophies already in use within the Division, including Appreciative Inquiry (AI), and the Breakthrough Series PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) model, to create a design model that values and includes staff at all levels in developing plans for improved outcomes. This model remained in use during this past year.

The Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement has assisted district office staff with the creation of their Practice Improvement Initiative (PII) through facilitating both a pre-Practice Improvement Initiative meeting to build a foundation for the Practice Improvement Initiative, as well as numerous meetings with a Practice Improvement Initiative development team following the Case Practice Review. The Practice Improvement Initiative development team membership is based on office needs and culture, but typically includes both Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Services Staff and supervisors along with Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Services Field Administrators. The Practice Improvement Initiative development, implementation and review process has also included external stakeholder input through the use of results from the Stakeholder Survey and Parent Focus Group to inform practice changes. In addition, a number of offices have further solicited feedback from youth

and parents around their Practice Improvement Initiative through their Youth Advisory Board and/or Better Together with Birth Parent Groups. A couple of offices also directly engaged parents from their Better Together with Birth Parent Groups in tasks aimed at improving the identified practices. At the conclusion of the Practice Improvement Initiative process, the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement has provided written reports and plans to these offices along with a tracking tool to measure progress toward the Practice Improvement Initiative. Practice Improvement Initiative efforts have been tracked and monitored by supervisors monthly and the field administrators quarterly. In addition, Bureau staff provide each office with written feedback on trends found through data collected quarterly on the Practice Improvement Initiative tracking tool. Although the Practice Improvement Initiatives are locally designed and implemented, Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement Staff are able to identify links to larger initiatives and resources, so that these can be leveraged to support the office's plan, as well as ensure a comprehensive and planned approach to Quality Improvement statewide. Examples of this over the past year include advocating for system level responses to training and service array needs, and clarification around statewide practice expectations.

Qualitative data is gathered during Case Practice Reviews from two sources, a stakeholder survey and a parent leader focus group. The on-line stakeholder survey has improved the amount and the quality of the data collected from stakeholders since it is more efficient and concise than a focus group. The stakeholder survey is designed to allow agencies/stakeholders to provide feedback regarding their experiences working collaboratively with Division for Children, Youth and Families staff and comment on their engagement with children, youth and families. The survey questionnaire responses are not shared directly with district office staff but instead are summarized and may be utilized in the creation of the Program Improvement Plan.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families believes that birth parents, foster parents and caregivers with system experience are committed to utilizing their voices in partnership with the Division to bring their unique perspective to bear on practice and policy discussion, and take on leadership roles in program and system's improvements. One way this is accomplished at the local level is through the formation of a district office Parent Leader Group. The Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement utilize the district office parent leader group as another opportunity for stakeholder feedback. The quality assurance focus group explores the quality of engagement of staff with parent leaders toward local and systemic practice improvements. Parent Leader focus groups are facilitated by the Bureau and typically conducted the week of the Case Practice Review. Results are summarized for the exit conference and provided to the district office to inform their Practice Improvement Initiative and enhance engagement and communication with their parent leader group.

#### CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW

The Division for Children, Youth and Families has begun preparations for Round Three of the Child Family Services Review (CFSR). New Hampshire is scheduled for a CFSR in 2018.

The Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement developed an implementation plan for the purpose of identifying organizational strengths and needs related to the roll-out of the Online Monitoring System (OMS), familiarization with the new On-Site Review Instrument



(OSRI) Tool and creation of an enhanced Quality Assurance Process. A workgroup was developed with representatives from the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement in quality assurance and improvement, policy, and organizational learning, as well as experienced reviewers and field administrators.

The implementation plan included viewing the Children's Bureau training videos on the OSRI and Quality Assurance Process, followed by a full day work session to practice with the online Mock Foster Care case. Periodic conference calls with ACF proved to be very helpful in prioritizing the challenges associated with the new CFSR process and review instrument.

Technical Assistance was provided to the Implementation workgroup by the Children's Bureau in January 2015. The Division for Children, Youth and Families had the opportunity to review questions and discuss findings from a pilot of the new tool following the Case Practice Review in December 2014. Specific questions were sent to ACF ahead of time along with two Juvenile Justice OSRI tools from the December review to be used as case examples for the new OSRI tool.

Implementation workgroup sessions have been held following all Case Practice Reviews in 2015 thus far, and will continue for remainder of 2015. These sessions afford continued opportunity for the workgroup members, who are the Quality Assurance Staff in Case Practice Reviews, to continue to practice application of the new OSRI to case examples, identify any additional questions needing clarification and plan any process changes that will accompany the use of new instrument.

In addition, the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement, along with Bureau Chiefs and Field Administrators, are selecting a core group of experienced reviewers to build a skilled and informed pool of staff to ensure inter-rater reliability. Additional Quality Assurance Staff have been trained and participate consistently in Case Practice Reviews and work sessions to improve skills and familiarity with the changes to the new review instrument and emphasis on quality assurance for the upcoming Child and Family Services Review.

### PERFORMANCE BASED STANDARDS (PBS)

As noted earlier, the Sununu Youth Services Center (SYSC) has voluntarily participated in PbS since 2009. Twice a year since that time the Sununu Youth Services Center has evaluated itself through collecting PbS data, by surveying youths, staff and families, and reporting administrative data, unusual incidents and the services offered by the facility or program. The Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement and Sununu Youth Services Center Staff, along with consultation from a PbS coach, analyze the data collected to identify what is working and what needs improvement. Outcome data are presented to management staff with a discussion around activity from previous data collections, and comparison to other states' findings. The Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement and Sununu Youth Services Center Staff team together to develop a Facility Improvement Plan (FIP) in response to the results.

The FIP has become a living document that measures successes and ensures that the Sununu Youth Services Center is working on safety, order, security, programming (education),

health/mental health services, justice, reintegration, and connection to family and social supports goals. Based upon measurable outcomes, Sununu Youth Services Center's participation in PbS has helped the facility significantly improve and achieve these goals.

The FIP is entered into the PbS website and monitored for effectiveness by staff, Division leaders and the PbS coach.

#### PRISON RAPE ELIMINATION ACT

The Federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA), passed in 2003, and the final rule and PREA Standards became effective August 20, 2012. PREA supports the elimination, reduction and prevention of sexual abuse and sexual harassment within correctional settings. The Sununu Youth Services Center implemented PREA Standards that promote zero tolerance of sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families contracted with a federal Department of Justice certified auditor in August of 2014 for the required audit of the Sununu Center. The audit was conducted August 4-8, 2014, and results were reported to the Division for Children, Youth and Families at the end of that week. The audit found that the Sununu Youth Services Center met or exceeded all standards and was in PREA compliance, making the Sununu Youth Services Center one of the first juvenile facilities in the country to achieve that goal. A final written report was issued on August 30, 2014, and has been made public on the Division's website, along with a required annual report on the Division for Children, Youth and Families' compliance with the standards, and materials developed to support that work.  
(<http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/djjs/institutional/prea.htm>)

The Division has continued to provide consultation, materials and guidance to its contracted shelter care program toward implementation of PREA standards and will be further supporting that facility by contracting with a certified auditor to conduct an audit of that program during the summer of 2015.

#### ASSESSMENT OF STRENGTHS, CONCERNS AND ENHANCEMENTS TO THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

The Division for Children, Youth and Families received feedback on the current functioning of New Hampshire Continuous Quality Improvement System from the Children's Bureau (CB) in December 2013. The CB outlined areas of strength of New Hampshire's existing Continuous Quality Improvement System and potential areas for improvement following a full day discussion in September 2013. The Division for Children, Youth and Families has begun work to address those areas in need of enhancement during the past year, as described in its CFSP and the Continuous Quality Improvement Goal of this report.

#### FOUNDATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement continue to function as the "hub" for Continuous Quality Improvement activities. Through its continued leadership of the design and implementation of the Division's Practice Model, the Bureau continues to touch all aspects of organizational assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation. Additionally,

through the intentional positioning of the training, policy, data, quality assurance and improvement functions within one Bureau, the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement is able to influence Continuous Quality Improvement throughout all Bureaus and areas of practice, and ensure that learning in one area is leveraged in another. As a number of Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement Staff work across these functional areas within the Bureau, communication is able to flow seamlessly among them.

The New Hampshire Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement, in collaboration with the University of New Hampshire, Center for Professional Excellence and University of New Hampshire, Department of Social Work Faculty, have taken initial steps toward a training plan to enhance Continuous Quality Improvement skills and knowledge of new and existing staff. It involves a multi-pronged approach to developing and sustaining Continuous Quality Improvement knowledge at graduated levels for staff in all areas of the Division. More detail about these efforts is described in the Continuous Quality Improvement Goal of this document.

During the past year, five Bureau staff have completed the Continuous Quality Improvement Academy, sponsored by the Children's Bureau. This has provided a consistent foundational knowledge for these staff, as well as a formal structure for Continuous Quality Improvement that staff are applying to new and existing activities. Additionally, concepts and materials from this Academy have been used in various forums to continue to increase the Continuous Quality Improvement knowledge of other Division staff, as well as provide training for new Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement staff.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families continues to have written policies and procedures regarding essential quality assurance activities such as the Case Practice Reviews and Practice Improvement Initiatives. However, work has begun toward the development of a more comprehensive Continuous Quality Improvement structure that will systematically and routinely coordinate the wide variety of Continuous Quality Improvement efforts that are in existence at all levels of the Division, as well as ensures meaningful involvement of stakeholders in these efforts. This structure will also allow the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement to identify where additional support may be needed to improve Continuous Quality Improvement efforts and provide that support. The Division intends to formalize this structure, once more fully developed, into a comprehensive Continuous Quality Improvement Manual, that will provide internal and external stakeholders with a view of these efforts Division-wide. Progress in this area is more fully described in the Continuous Quality Improvement Goal of this document.

## QUALITY DATA COLLECTION

The Division continues to place great value on quality data collection. Data is available from many sources, including the Bridges Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System, AFCARS/NCANDS, State Data Profile, Case Practice Reviews, the CourtStream information system and Performance-based Standards at the Sununu Youth Services Center, NYTD data, provider reviews, training evaluation and ongoing surveys of staff and stakeholders. During this past year, administrative staff and supervisors have begun to access data from the Results-Oriented Management (ROM) system as well.



The use of administrative data to monitor and improve practice has continued. A collaborative approach developed with the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement's and Bureau of Information System's Leadership is a Data Managers group formed to include both analysts and program managers. The group focus is on information sharing, improving data collection, report development and reviewing outcomes data. Additionally, the Division for Children, Youth and Families has a clear data policy in place that ensures consistency in the management of both internal and external data requests.

The Division has made strides in improving data quality in particular during the past year, including developing a brief data quality training that will be delivered to all field supervisors in June. Additionally, the ongoing development and testing of the ROM system has resulted in the clarification of a number of data entry areas, and added to consistency in these items.

#### CASE REVIEW DATA AND PROCESS

As noted above, the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement (BOLQI) has continued to lead a Case Practice Review process that utilizes methods of selecting case samples, collecting and analyzing data from the On-Site Review Instrument, case interviews and stakeholder feedback that mirrors the traditional federal Child & Family Services Reviews. Additionally, the BOLQI has continued the use of the Solution Based Casework (SBC) Fidelity Tool on each case in the sample to its standard review process. This tool serves multiple purposes of evaluating the implementation and sustainability of Solution Based Casework as the foundation of the New Hampshire Practice Model, maintaining fidelity to the model, and positioning the Practice Model as the underpinning of staff's work with families. Uniform Quality Assurance/Reviewer Training, standardized tools and inter-rater reliability methods for both tools are in place.

The Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement has continued to conduct an annual review of the largest metropolitan site in New Hampshire as well as other district offices that are representative of the varying geographic and demographic areas of the state. Procedures and training remain in place that ensures an unbiased review of cases free of any conflict of interest.

In addition to the case level interviews conducted, each Case Practice Review includes two other opportunities to solicit stakeholder feedback. In each district office reviewed, an online stakeholder survey is conducted inquiring about the collaboration and engagement of district office staff with stakeholders and Division's performance on safety, permanency and well-being efforts. Additionally, a focus group of district office parent leaders is conducted during each review week. The focus groups are designed to explore the level and quality of engagement of staff with parent leaders toward local and systemic practice improvements. These activities are intended to provide input regarding not only practice strengths and challenges, but also the involvement of stakeholders in ongoing Continuous Quality Improvement efforts.

The Division has demonstrated some ability to conduct small scale ad hoc reviews when necessary during the past year, although capacity to develop new ongoing review processes remains limited. Details of these ad hoc reviews are found in the Continuous Quality Improvement Goal section of this document.

## ANALYSIS AND DISSEMINATION OF QUALITY DATA

The New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families continues to move forward in developing tools and processes to thoroughly embed the availability and usage of data in all levels of the Division. Data of many types continues to be distributed to staff on a regular basis through management reports and Case Practice Reviews. Data is routinely reviewed at monthly statewide Leadership meetings with all field supervisors. Incident report data and Performance-based Standards results are reviewed at the Sununu Youth Services Center Leadership meetings as well.

However, the most significant development in the Division's capacity in this area is the continuing work with Kansas University to develop the ROM reporting system. This system rolled out to field supervisors, super-users, and administrative staff in April of 2014 with data on both Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Placement cases. At that time, these staff were provided with training in skills to analyze and use this new data availability to improve practice at all levels of the Division's work. Data from ROM has also been reviewed at Leadership meetings, and practice discussions have focused on how this data can be utilized in district offices. Work has now been completed and testing is underway on the in-home ROM reports, which will roll-out to these users during the summer of 2015. Additionally, all field staff will be trained and have access to these ROM reports at that time. The ROM system will provide user-friendly, real-time access to data "at the fingertips" of staff at all levels, providing a powerful tool to drive local and state level Continuous Quality Improvement efforts.

Stakeholders, including youth and parents, have continued to be involved in many aspects of the Division's function, however, the Division for Children, Youth and Families has also taken steps over the past year to explore ways to include them more specifically and meaningfully in analyzing available data and selecting solutions. The stakeholder survey and parent focus group described above that accompany each Case Practice Review are two examples of these efforts. The Division for Children, Youth and Families has also conducted several sessions with key stakeholder groups in which performance or outcome data was presented and stakeholders were engaged in analyzing the data and suggesting solutions. More details of these efforts can be found in the [Continuous Quality Improvement Goal](#) section of this document.

Additionally, in support of the goal of further stakeholder involvement in the analysis of its data, the Division has worked with the developers of the ROM system on plans to implement a public interface for the system that would provide aggregated data, and has made the decision to move forward with this effort. This facet will ensure that stakeholders will have access to real time data on important outcomes. More information regarding the roll-out of this public face can be found in the Continuous Quality Improvement Goal section.

New Hampshire had recognized that increased availability of data to staff must be accompanied by increased skill development in analysis of this data as well, if it is to be useful in Continuous Quality Improvement efforts. To that end, New Hampshire created a comprehensive training plan in conjunction with the roll-out of the ROM system. Additionally, New Hampshire has intentionally leveraged its partnership with the University of New Hampshire, Department of Social Work under the University Partnership grant, awarded by the National Child Welfare Workforce Initiative, to focus workforce development efforts on competency in data-driven decision-making. Data trainings have been delivered as pilots during the past year, and will be

expanded over the next year, all working toward the creation of an Academy for Division for Children, Youth and Families Data Leaders. This Academy will become a regular offering of the Division's Training Program for selected staff, and is expected to build capacity in data-driven decision-making and leadership development across the Division. It is intended that these Data Leaders will take on leadership roles in the development and support of the local and state level Continuous Quality Improvement Teams.

Further, over the past year New Hampshire has increasingly leveraged its collaboration with state colleges and universities to expand capacity to analyze and present data regarding crucial measures and outcomes. Specifically, the Division for Children, Youth and Families has engaged in studies with the University of New Hampshire and Dartmouth College to explore data from staff exit interviews, the NYTD surveys, the Division's substantiation rate, re-entry into care, results of a Data Culture Survey, and evaluation of the impact of the Realistic Job Preview video on recruitment and job satisfaction. These results have been shared with relevant stakeholder groups when completed.

### FEEDBACK AND ADJUSTMENT OF PROGRAMS AND PROCESSES

The Division has continued with, and added a number of processes over the past year, both formal and informal, to translate the results of data in order to drive practice improvement forward. Primary mechanisms in place to drive program change in response to data are statewide Leadership discussions and local Practice Improvement Initiatives (PIIs). Leadership Meetings routinely include the sharing of data, practice strategies and consistent practice direction. Practice Improvement Initiatives are created by district office staff teams facilitated by the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement following each Case Practice Review, and strategies are directly linked to improving specific review results. Implementation of the Practice Improvement Initiatives is tracked by Supervisors, field administrators and the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement to ensure that practice adjustments are made.

A noteworthy example of this reciprocal flow of information between quality assurance and practice staff can be found in New Hampshire's recent focus on its protective investigation process. Ongoing data reviews indicated continuing problems with closing investigations according to policy timeframes, although initial face-to-face response timeframes continued to be maintained. Exit interviews also increasingly indicated these staff were overwhelmed with the volume of work. Discussions with supervisors and administrators identified a number of possible causes for this, as well as additional concerns about the investigation process. A representative workgroup was formed that included field staff, supervisors, administrators and the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement Staff, and further data was collected and presented to the workgroup. The group identified some initial strategies and began researching possible solutions. Although New Hampshire is just at the initial stages of the exploration of these issues, this provides an example of the mechanisms in place that allow data to be used to inform practice improvement.

Last year a multi-disciplinary evaluation group was formed that continues to provide another formal mechanism for monitoring and coordinating improvement efforts. The group meets regularly with a standing agenda that includes the Practice Model evaluation and time for

consultation on prospective or ongoing evaluation activities. A significant achievement of the group has been the creation of an electronic tracking of existing Division evaluation activities made accessible to all Bureau and State Office Staff. Over the past year, the group has reviewed each Systemic Factor and assessed data available to measure performance on those factors.

Key stakeholder connections and collaboration continue in all program areas at both the state and local levels, and as noted above, the Division for Children, Youth and Families has conducted several sessions with key stakeholder groups during the past year in which stakeholders reviewed Division's data and provided suggestions for improvements. The Division for Children, Youth and Families has also engaged in several public reviews of New Hampshire Juvenile Justice Services specifically during the past year, including collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, and has received and responded to recommendations from those reviews.

It is anticipated that the formal Continuous Quality Improvement structure and manual that is referenced above will incorporate a more proactive systematic approach toward the use of data to identify practice challenges at all levels across the Division. While currently there are many avenues to access data to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of casework practice and processes, the Division for Children, Youth and Families has recognized in its CFSP the need to ensure that they are used to the fullest extent to critically analyze trends and issues and to share with stakeholders to lead data-informed discussions toward improvements.

In addition, the Division for Children, Youth and Families continues to use a number of methods to assess the effectiveness of its Continuous Quality Improvement System, and has made improvements in response to feedback from reviewers, staff, federal partners, and Continuous Quality Improvement learning. These changes have included such things as increased consistency in reviewer training and ratings, changes to the proportion of Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Cases, and the quality assurance process both during and after the review. Most notably during the past year, the Division for Children, Youth and Families has engaged in a series of trainings with federal partners and internally with all Case Practice Review Quality Assurance staff to prepare for the accurate and consistent usage of the new federal OSRI tool and Quality Assurance process.

## **Staff and Provider Training**

The Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement (BOLQI) has built and led an array of internal and external partnerships across the state that provide a vital, multi-pronged approach to competency-based training design, delivery and evaluation. This system has established a solid foundation for imparting the knowledge, skills and techniques integral to effective Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Practice. Specific components of the current training system include:

- Partnerships via performance-based contracts with higher education institutions and non-profit partners;
- Collaboration with other state entities such as the State of New Hampshire's Bureau of Education and Training, New Hampshire DHHS Office of Development and Training

Services (ODTS), New Hampshire State Police Standards and Training, the Court Improvement Project; and

- Targeted Division for Children, Youth and Families Staff involved in training delivery, management and oversight.

In 2011, when the Practice Model was initially developed, training partners, staff and trainers worked to infuse the beliefs and principles into curriculums. As specific Practice Model strategies were selected such as Solution Based Casework, Solution Based Family Meetings, New Hampshire Integrated Assessment (NHIA), Family Assessment and Inclusive Reunification (FAIR) Meetings, the Parent Partner Strategy, the Youth Action Pool and the SAVRY (Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth), pre-service and ongoing trainings continue to be revised to incorporate these practices. Additionally, curriculums have been and continue to be revised to reflect updated research and best practices, and in some instances, combined for Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Audiences in light of the merger of the two Divisions. As referenced in the Goals section, Restorative Practices and Trauma-Informed training for staff is ongoing in light of the implementation stage of those models.

The Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement's annual training plan supports the goals set forth in the Division's five-year Child and Family Services Plan and guides curriculum enhancements, training design, delivery and scheduling. In order to support cross-systems coordination and consultation, in 2014, the National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, facilitated the development of an enhanced structure for collaboration among the Division for Children, Youth and Families and its contracted training and education partners. This group, now named the Leadership in Learning and Collaboration (LiLaC), is being sustained by Division Staff and includes all the leaders of the contracted agencies that the Division for Children, Youth and Families partners with to deliver training. The group works to move the curriculum, trainers, technology, needs assessment and evaluation components of training toward a more collaborative and integrated process. Initial evaluation of this group will be conducted during the process of creating an executive reporting of outcomes for the first year of work in the next three months.

## STAFF TRAINING

The University of New Hampshire's, Center for Professional Excellence with the Department of Social Work is the primary staff training contractor for the Division for Children, Youth and Families. In field services, each district office is assigned an Educational Program Coordinator from the contract that is the liaison for training monitoring and tracking to the Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers and Child Protective Service Workers. These coordinators spend time in each district office to assist staff in learning what trainings they have taken and still need to take to complete the Core Academy cycle.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families continues to utilize a training module within the New Hampshire Bridges Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) for coordinating training and maintaining records in order to support compliance. All Division staff training is scheduled, advertised and tracked (for attendance and completion of



requirements) through the Bridges Information System. Staff and supervisors can access and monitor their own training records and register for internal trainings via Bridges.

### INITIAL STAFF TRAINING

The initial “Core Academy” training program for new staff includes face-to-face and online classroom formats as well as on the job training and mentoring. All new Child Protective Service Workers, Sununu Youth Services Center Youth Counselors, and Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers are required to complete the Core Academy Training program within their first year of employment. Since July 2014, the Core Academy is being delivered in a tiered process with similar/like trainings delivered to Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers and Child Protective Service Workers in a combined audience. For the field, this allows Child Protective Service Workers and Juvenile Probation and Parole Officer’s to take a limited independent caseload at the end of Tier One, having completed the foundational and immediately critical training topics, and complete the rest of the Core Academy trainings within the first year of employment while carrying a caseload. These changes are designed to improve the initial training process in several ways that have been identified as needs in recent years. In Child Protective Services, staff were at times unable to complete their initial training and take independent cases for an extensive period of time after their hire, and in Juvenile Justice, staff were unable to integrate classroom training with time in the office in order to apply their learning. Additionally, by integrating trainings across areas of practice (Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Services together) where appropriate, the stage is set for shared practices. Further, it ensures the content each sets of initial training programs is up-to-date, with quality offerings that are connected to the competencies needed for the jobs. Because of the different workforce needs for the Sununu Youth Services Center Staff, a three week format for Core Academy Training has been delivered to that audience, and will continue to be offered two times per year. Where Youth Counselors and Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers intersect in their need for specific safety related trainings, both will attend together, also setting the stage for shared practices in those areas.

In addition to attending trainings, all new staff are assigned a seasoned and specifically selected staff member as a Field Training Officer or Mentor. It is the responsibility of those staff to work alongside these new staff to show them office culture, area and Division resources, as well as model behaviors and tasks for new hires that are critical to the work. They act as a sounding board and coach on many of the new hire’s job activities. The Division’s Mentoring Log is a vital connection for the newly hired staff to the larger Division, the day-to-day skill set to do the job, and the start of the demonstration of the new staff’s ability to perform some of the evidenced-based practices utilized by the Division.

Tier One training are offered four times per year to ensure that new staff are able to take all required trainings within three months of their hire date. During this time they will also complete corresponding sections of their Mentoring Log. Once these two requirements are completed and with supervisor approval, they will be approved to be assigned a limited number of primary cases. Tier Two trainings are offered two times per year, and staff have one year to complete these remaining trainings and the remainder of their Mentoring Log. Once these two requirements are completed, and with supervisor approval, they will have completed the training

requirements necessary for graduation and promotion. The tiered training system with required trainings for each practice area is shown on the following page.

## DCYF Core Academy

Track			Tier 1 (First 3 months of employment)	
CPS	JPP	SYSC	Training Title	Duration
•	•	✓	Tier 1 Report Writing	1 day
•	•		Tier 1 Engaging Families in Solution-Based Child Protection and Juvenile Probation & Parole	3 days
□	□		Tier 1 Better Together with Birth Parents (Engaging Families Learning Lab) (Please Note: To enroll, call Geraldo Pilarski at 271-0532. Attendance is by invitation only. There is a limit of ten DCYF staff attendees per session of this training.)	2 days
•			Tier 1 Assessment in Solution-Based Child Protection	3 days
•			Tier 1 Basic Bridges for CPS	1 day
•			Tier 1 Staying Safe During Home and Office Visits	1 day
•			Tier 1 Investigations in Solution-Based Child Protection	1 day
•			Tier 1 Investigations in Solution-Based Child Protection Learning Lab	half day
•			Tier 1 Case Planning in Solution-Based Child Protection	3 days
	•		Tier 1 Assessment in Juvenile Probation & Parole (SAVRY)	1 day
	•		Tier 1 Officer Safety	2 hours
	•		Tier 1 Searches	2.5 hours
	•		Tier 1 Introduction to Pre-Dispositions	half day
	•		Tier 1 Community-Based Supervision	2 hours
	•	✓	Tier 1 Basic Bridges for JPP & SYSC	half day
	*	✓	Tier 1 Aggression Management and Defensive Tactics	1 day
	*	✓	Tier 1 Proper Use of Handcuffs	half day
		✓	Tier 1 SYSC Fire Safety	1 hour
		✓	Tier 1 CPR/AED/First Aid	1 day
		✓	Tier 1 PREA (Prevention of Sexual Harassment & Sexual Abuse)	2 hours
		✓	Tier 1 Proactive Engagement & Restrictive Interventions	2.5 hours
Track			Tier 2 (First 6 months of employment)	
CPS	JPP	SYSC	Training Title	Duration
•	•	✓	Tier 2 DCYF Orientation: Our Practice Model	1 day
•	•	✓	Tier 2 Art of Mentoring	half day
•	•		Tier 2 A Solution-Based Approach to Child Protection and Juvenile Probation & Parole	2 days
•	•		Tier 2 Special Education in Child Protection and Juvenile Probation & Parole	1 day
•	•		Tier 2 Revenue Enhancement (includes RMS (Random Moment Sample))	1 day
•			Tier 2 Legal Aspects of Family-Centered Child Protection	2 days
•			Tier 2 Effects of Abuse and Neglect	2.5 days
•			Tier 2 Separation, Placement and Reunification in Solution-Based Child Protection	2 days
•			Tier 2 Working with Families Coping with Mental Health Issues	1 day
•			Tier 2 A Trauma-Informed Approach to Assessing the Mental Health Needs of Families	1.5 days
•			Tier 2 Adolescent Toolbox	1 day
•			Tier 2 Cultural Competency	1 day
•			Tier 2 Central Registry	half day
•			Tier 2 ICPC (Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children)	half day
•			Tier 2 Prevention of Disease Transmission	half day
•			Tier 2 Impact of Domestic Violence	1 day
□			Initial Training on Addiction & Recovery (To enroll, email <a href="mailto:AODTrainingCoordinator@dhhs.state.nh.us">AODTrainingCoordinator@dhhs.state.nh.us</a> or call Shannon Quinn at 271-5889. This training is offered by the NH Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services.)	1 day
	*		Tier 2 JDAI (Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative)	1 hour
	•		Tier 2 Legal Aspects of Juvenile Probation & Parole (includes motions/violations)	2 days
	•		Tier 2 Jail Compliance	1 hour
	•		Tier 2 Substance Abuse and Juvenile Probation & Parole	half day
	•		Tier 2 ICJ (Interstate Compact on Juveniles)	1 hour
	•		Tier 2 Domestic Violence and Juvenile Probation & Parole	half day
	•	✓	Tier 2 Procedures for Parole	1.5 hours
	•	✓	Tier 2 Gang Knowledge	half day
	•	✓	Tier 2 Adolescent Mental Health	2 hours
	•	✓	Tier 2 Cognitive Self Change	1.5 hours
	•	✓	Tier 2 Select Populations	2 hours
	•	✓	Tier 2 Adolescent Development	1 day
	•	✓	Tier 2 Blood-Borne Pathogens/Psychotropic Drugs/Med Pass	half day
		✓	Tier 2 SYSC Tour/Security	2 hours
		✓	Tier 2 Resident & Visitor Searches	2 hours
		✓	Tier 2 Ombudsman Program	1 hour
		✓	Tier 2 SYSC Programming	2 hours
		✓	Tier 2 Restorative Practices	half day
		✓	Tier 2 Reporting Laws	2 hours

**Enrollment Key:**

- Enroll in this training via the **DCYF** Bridges training module (On the Workshop Search screen, make sure that “**DCYF**” is selected in the “Department” field (in the lower right corner) before you search for the training).
- \* Enroll in this training via the **DJJS** Bridges training module (On the Workshop Search screen, make sure that “**DJJS**” is selected in the “Department” field (in the lower right corner) before you search for the training).
- Enroll in this training by contacting the individual or agency specified after the training title.
- ✓ SYSC Staff, please enroll in trainings by contacting Eric Skillings ([ESkillings@dhhs.state.nh.us](mailto:ESkillings@dhhs.state.nh.us)) or call 625-5471, ext. 372.

(Updated 4/22/2015)



Trainers for Core Academy trainings come from the cadre of certified trainers the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement maintains through its contractual partnerships with the University of New Hampshire CPE or other training system partners. The majority of Core Academy trainers are Division staff, who are able to infuse the training material with practice knowledge and experience. Below is summary evaluation data for Core Academy trainings delivered between July 1, 2014 and December 30, 2014:

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Total # of Responses</i>	<i>Avg. Rating</i>
1. The trainer(s) presented the material in an effective manner.	678	4.69
2. The trainer(s) helped me to learn new concepts.	678	4.66
3. The trainer(s) acted as a classroom facilitator (encouraged discussion and/or questions and kept the class on task).	679	4.69
4. The trainer(s) demonstrated cultural sensitivity.	624	4.66
5. I will use what I learned from this training in my job.	674	4.78
6. This workshop increased my practice knowledge.	673	4.69

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Total # of Responses</i>	<i>Avg. Rating</i>
7. How satisfied were you with the subject matter of this workshop?	676	4.66
8. How satisfied were you w/ relevance of activities related to workshop?	668	4.65
9. How satisfied were you with learning aids (Ppt, handouts, a/v, etc.)?	671	4.51
10. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with this workshop?	672	4.66

The Division for Children, Youth and Families tracks completion of both Tier One and Tier Two of Core Academy, and is improving its system of follow-up when trainings are missed. For nineteen new field staff hired between May 30, 2014 and December 1, 2014, (89 percent) completed all nine Tier One modules within the following six months. The two staff that did not complete all Tier One modules missed one training each. Twelve (63 percent) of those staff completed ninety percent or more of the complete twenty-six modules of both Tier One and Tier Two trainings within that six months, six (31 percent) of those staff completed seventy-five percent or more of all modules within six months, and one staff member had completed only sixty-five percent of the modules within six months. The reformatting of the Core training program into the tiered system has resulted in more new staff completing what were formerly the “Related” trainings, as they are all now considered part of Core Academy. Regular reports of new staff that are missing modules will be provided to Educational Program Consultants as well as field administrators going forward, for follow-up with new staff and supervisors to ensure the required training is taken.

Supervisors within the Division for Children, Youth and Families have access to numerous opportunities for initial and ongoing supervisory training. The Division’s parent agency, the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, runs specific supervisor training programs, which all new supervisors are required to attend. Additionally, the Department offers a Supervisor Certificate Program that many staff and supervisors have attended. These activities are currently funded through non-Title IV-E state and federal sources. Additionally, the Division holds an intensive, in-depth supervisory training on a bi-annual basis. This training is specific to supervision in a Child Welfare setting, and is designed to provide supervisors with the management, clinical and case practice knowledge needed to guide their staff to consistently

support the Vision, Mission, Guiding Principles and goals of the Division through best practices. This past session saw Child Protective Supervisors, Juvenile Probation and Parole Supervisors, Child Protective Service Worker, and Sununu Youth Services Center Staff with supervisory responsibility in attendance. The training was delivered over five days in June and July of 2014. Attendees rated the training with an overall satisfaction rating of five on a five point scale in relevance and satisfaction for all attendees. As it relates to the supervisory training delivered by the Department of Health and Human Services required supervisory trainings, 92 percent of attendees over the past calendar year rated their overall satisfaction with the trainings as excellent. Also below are supervisor evaluations of the Supervisor Core training series delivered in June and July of 2014. With the exception of one supervisor who was recently hired, all fifty-five current Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Supervisors have attended at least one offered supervisory training.

### ONGOING SHORT-TERM STAFF TRAINING

Each year an annual staff training calendar is developed to meet the ongoing and advanced training needs of the Division's seasoned staff. These trainings are delivered through localized team and office based training, online trainings, centralized classroom trainings, and through two annual conferences. Training needs for Child Protection Staff have been assessed using aggregate data from Annual Individual Training Plans or Annual Training Surveys as a starting point to identify potential training needs statewide. Because of staff feedback on the cumbersome nature of these surveys, as well as the need to identify a more formal and systematic training needs assessment process for Juvenile Justice Staff, a change is being made to utilize annual performance evaluations as a mechanism to identify training needs for staff as it relates to staff competencies. Beyond this method for needs assessment, Bureau staff and training partners meet with individual office teams and supervisors to ensure specific needs for ongoing and advanced training are identified. Division for Children, Youth and Families' Employees are required to attend thirty hours (Child Protective Services), forty hours (Juvenile Justice Services and Sununu Youth Services Center) and twelve hours (state office) respectively of ongoing training annually, however changes have been drafted to that policy to add consistency and clarity to these requirements. The draft policy will require thirty hours for all field staff (Child Protective Services, Juvenile Justice Services and Sununu Youth Services Center), eighteen for part-time staff, and twelve hours for all other staff. Although supervisors currently assess completion of these requirements for individual staff at the time of their performance evaluation, the Division for Children, Youth and Families intends to refine reports in the upcoming year to better assess this on an aggregate level. Several trainings for Juvenile Justice and facility staff are delivered as refresher trainings annually, specifically related to safety and certifications, for courses such as Aggression Management and Defensive Tactics and Handcuffing (non-Title IV-E funded). Title IV-E funds are used to support many ongoing (in-service) training activities (specific trainings are described in the training plan attached). The Division for Children, Youth and Families continues to partner with specific expert trainers for ongoing staff training and organizational consultation as needed.

Seasoned staff also have access to trainings outside the Division provided by other state agencies, community and higher education partners across the state, regionally and nationally. Further, the Division for Children, Youth and Families holds an annual conference that offers a diverse array of workshops and networking opportunities. In the last five years, attendance has

grown to over 400 staff and provider partners in attendance for workshops and information sessions.

Below is summary evaluation data from specialized trainings offered between July 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014.

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Total # of Responses</i>	<i>Avg. Rating</i>
1. The trainer(s) presented the material in an effective manner.	141	4.72
2. The trainer(s) helped me to learn new concepts.	141	4.48
3. The trainer(s) acted as a classroom facilitator (encouraged discussion and/or questions and kept the class on task).	141	4.69
4. The trainer(s) demonstrated cultural sensitivity.	128	4.57
5. I will use what I learned from this training in my job.	141	4.65
6. This workshop increased my practice knowledge.	139	4.58

<i>Questions</i>	<i>Total # of Responses</i>	<i>Avg. Rating</i>
7. How satisfied were you with the subject matter of this workshop?	141	4.65
8. How satisfied were you w/ relevance of activities related to workshop?	137	4.55
9. How satisfied were you with learning aids (Ppt, handouts, a/v, etc.)?	140	4.58
10. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with this workshop?	141	4.62

## TRAINING ON PREVENTING SEX TRAFFICKING

This year, in response to the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act, New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families collaborated with the University of New Hampshire CPE and Traffick 911-Deena Graves to present the New Hampshire Symposium on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking to a multi-disciplinary group including Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Service's staff and community partners. This presentation introduced attendees to domestic minor sex trafficking and ways to combat the issue. It built knowledge of the vulnerabilities of at-risk groups, including neglected, abused, homeless and runaway youth. It explained what drives this crime, including buyer demand, pimp manipulation, and cultural facilitators. Finally, it discussed ways to identify and assist victims, while highlighting prevention strategies. The Division for Children, Youth and Families, in collaboration with the New Hampshire Department of Education, is continuing to work with this trainer to develop a train the trainer model for sustainability and consistent cross Division messaging.

## LONG-TERM STAFF TRAINING

Through the Division's Education Tuition Partnership Program (ETP), and partnerships with the Departments of Social Work at two University System of New Hampshire Schools, Plymouth State University and University of New Hampshire, the Division for Children, Youth and Families has supported up to eight current and/or potential employees annually to obtain a Bachelor of Social Work degree or a Master's Degree in Social Work for one to two years of their college education. Participants have been selected through a competitive screening process. Once chosen, they receive in-state tuition and fees, as well as stipend for books and incidentals related to their education. This monetary contribution toward education is paid back through

required work commitment with the Division for Children, Youth and Families. The programs have continued to produce new staff with the depth and breadth of knowledge necessary to begin a career in the Division for Children, Youth and Families. These long-term staff training programs each produces annual evaluation data as part of their contracts. The Plymouth State University program reported the respondent's overall level of satisfaction with their experience with various program components on scales of one to five, for academic year 2013-2014.

**STUDENTS** reported an overall level of satisfaction with PSU's Program Components of the *Child Welfare (Title IV-E) Educational Tuition Partnership* of **3.5**. (Student breakdown: **STUDENT ONE = 2 AND STUDENT TWO = 5**).

**FIELD INSTRUCTORS** reported an overall level of satisfaction with PSU's Program Components of the *Child Welfare (Title IV-E) Educational Tuition Partnership* of **4.5**.

**PROGRAM COORDINATOR** reported an overall level of satisfaction with PSU's Program Components of the *Child Welfare (Title IV-E) Educational Tuition Partnership* of **5**.

The University of New Hampshire program also reported the student's overall level of satisfaction with their experience with various program components on scales of one to five, for academic year 2013-2014. Student ratings of Title IV-E program components ranged from 3.00 to 4.50, with a mean overall Program Component Rating of 3.68. Additionally, qualitative data from interviews with students, Division's Supervisors, University of New Hampshire and Division Program Coordinators provided evidence that the University of New Hampshire/Division for Children, Youth and Families Title IV-E Educational Partnership continues to offer valuable training in Child Welfare. The evaluation also offered several areas for consideration or potential improvement, including (1) standardized guidelines and expectations for supervision of student interns across district offices; (2) establishing plans for maximizing training opportunities, (3) increased transition planning for students graduating from the program; (4) enhanced efforts to recruit Division Staff and (5) possibilities for improved communication.

Several of these areas, which have also been identified in other arenas, have specifically been addressed during this past year. A complete internship guide, policy and processes have been developed with input from a wide variety of staff and groups throughout the Division, and are awaiting final approval. The development of this guide and increased opportunities provided through the University Partnership grant (described below) have resulted in rejuvenated "marketing" of these opportunities to existing Division Staff. The Division and University of New Hampshire, Department of Social Work have been able to collaborate on a model for existing staff to complete the substantial MSW field placement requirements within the Division while remaining in their current positions, an issue that has been a barrier to enrollment in the past. Lastly, the development and continuation of the Leadership in Learning and Collaboration (LiLaC) group of Division's Training Partners noted above has led to increased communication and collaboration between the Division and all its contracted training partners.

Lastly, as a workforce development strategy beginning in the fall of 2014, and each year through academic year 2018-2019, the University of New Hampshire, in collaboration with the Division, was awarded a National Child Welfare Workforce Institute grant to support up to five University

Partnership (UP) Program Trainees. Current and prospective Division staff have the opportunity to enroll and be accepted as Social Work students to focus their education and future employment in the area of Child Welfare, with an emphasis on evidence-based practice models and data-driven decision-making. The University Partnership (UP) Program at the University of New Hampshire enhances Child Welfare workforce development and provides Child Welfare education and training to existing and prospective staff as undergraduate and graduate social work students. Preliminary evaluation data regarding the first year of this program is not yet available, however a debriefing and planning meeting with the University of New Hampshire and Division staff focused on lessons learned from the initial year and informed planning for the upcoming year.

#### TRAINING FOR FOSTER/ADOPTIVE PARENT, RELATIVE CAREGIVERS, AND RESIDENTIAL CARE PROVIDERS

The Education and Training Partnership between the Division and Granite State College provides training to foster and adoptive parents, relative caregivers and residential care providers. The E&TP partners with the Division for Children, Youth and Families in assessing training as it relates to the principles of accessibility, needs based, outcomes focused and locally delivered, within the Practice Model Framework.

#### INITIAL PROVIDER TRAINING

Since 2006, the E&TP has delivered Foster and Adoptive Care Essentials (FACES) to individuals interested in providing foster and/or adoptive care. This training series consists of twenty-one hours of training that promotes a better understanding of working with children, families and Child Placing Agencies connected with the Division for Children, Youth and Families. This training assists in preparing individuals to be skilled caregivers and professional team members. Courses are primarily instructed by foster and adoptive parents who have been recruited and trained as instructors with Granite State College. This series of seven three-hour modules is delivered statewide and fulfills New Hampshire state training licensing requirements. The full seven module series has been run 156 times over the last five years (specific trainings are described in the training grids attached). All resource parents must complete the full training series in order to be licensed, and Resource Workers are able to view courses that resource parents have taken from the E&TP in the Bridges system when issuing a license. For both the Orientation and Regulations Modules of the FACES trainings, a pre and post-test component showed a pre-test rating of seventy-four percent and eighty-two percent respectively and post-test rating of ninety-four percent and ninety percent respectively, thus highlighting the increased awareness and acquisition of knowledge that participants obtain in these two modules.

Residential Counselor Core Training (RCCT) is offered to residential care staff to support their work with children and/or youth in care and their families in any of New Hampshire's residential facilities. A thirty hour competency-based training series, RCCT provides generalized training that addresses the basic knowledge, skills and abilities essential to the position of residential counselor, regardless of the facility in which they are employed. The full five module series has been delivered thirteen times over the last five years. Due to the declining number of residential providers in the state, the number of offerings specific to the residential provider audience has significantly decreased, thus prompting more targeted needs assessment efforts to meet this



changing field. Those efforts have begun. Most recently, the Division for Children, Youth and Families has partnered with Cornell University and Granite State College to bring the de-escalation techniques from Therapeutic Crisis Intervention to New Hampshire in a train the trainer model that includes both residential facility staff along with Sununu Youth Services Center Staff and Juvenile Justice staff to bring consistency and best practice in the collective interaction with youth through the use of an evidenced-based model (the current trainings are described in the separate training grids).

The *Relatively Speaking* Curriculum is designed to serve as a partial alternative to the *FACES* curriculum for relatives who wish to become licensed or are non-licensed caregivers of children in care. *Relatively Speaking* is delivered in an e-workbook course format that is emailed to each participant. Participants communicate with the instructor via email and also email their work back to instructors for review. The classes are designed to further the understanding of the relative caregiver's role, enhance skills to strengthen and manage relationships, and provide information on the impact and effect on the child, birth parent, and the relative's family. The full series of three modules was delivered nine times during SFY 2014.

### ONGOING PROVIDER TRAINING

Initiated in 1996, the Caregiver Ongoing Training (COT) is a program of competency-based courses designed in collaboration with Division staff, resource parents and residential child care staff. Resource parents are required to have nine hours of ongoing training per year. The COT program is the primary vehicle for resource parents to meet this requirement. Classes are open to eligible caregivers, staff and providers, including relative caregivers, and are intended to provide the skills and knowledge necessary to address daily issues and the challenges of working with children in placement and their families. Approximately 150 training courses have been delivered statewide in local communities each year (specific trainings are described in the separate training grids). Completion of annual training requirements by individual foster homes is reviewed by Resource Workers during relicensing, and Resource Workers are able to view trainings that resource parents have taken from the E&TP in the Bridges system.

The following table describes trainee evaluation ratings for the four major programs offered to provider groups by the E&TP during SFY 2014:

FY14 Course Evaluation Continuous Quality Improvement Data		
Class	Response Rate	Satisfaction Rate *
<b>FACES</b>	92.00%	3.92
<b>COT</b>	64.67%	4.52
<b>Relatively Speaking</b>	60.00%	4.50
<b>RCCT</b>	44.00%	4.20

*\*FACES is based on a 4 point scale, the remainder of the classes is based on a five point scale.*

Ongoing needs assessment is a significant part of Continuous Quality Improvement for the Education and Training Partnership in meeting the training needs of their various constituencies, and is continuously pursued through a variety of formal and informal activities. In SFY14, training needs assessments were accomplished using the following methods:

- Information and feedback provided by NHFAPA through its Executive Director, and E&TP staff visits with local foster/adoptive parent support groups;
- Various meetings and conversations with Division for Children, Youth and Families Resource Workers, Individual Service Option (ISO) Resource workers, and Foster/Adoptive parent support groups, as well as independent requests from all of the above;
- Information and requests for trainings provided on Caregiver Ongoing Training evaluation forms;
- Direct inquiries sent to each Division for Children, Youth and Families District Office by E&TP;
- Outreach to residential facility Directors and Program Coordinators in each region to solicit specific training needs; and
- E & TP staff working closely with the Division for Children, Youth and Families Resource Workers and Child Placement Agency staff to determine the need and scheduling of *FACES* trainings.

Training is delivered in traditional classrooms, and community sites (approximately forty local community sites including GSC Centers, libraries, police/fire stations, hospitals, schools, community centers and residential facilities). All facilities are assessed for safety and ADA accessibility. Distance learning is also offered for specific courses and includes, workbooks, audio, and online modalities. Curriculum revisions occur on a regular basis to reflect Division practice changes. Over the past five years, training related to sexual abuse/harassment, trauma-informed care, and birth parent involvement have been added as stand-alone trainings and infused into existing pre-service and ongoing trainings. Most recently, Therapeutic Crisis Intervention was added to be utilized in residential facilities as a strategy in de-escalation of youth in placement.

Instructors are community practitioners qualified to teach specific courses based on their resume, curriculum vitae, a personal interview, academic credentials, expertise, years of experience in their field and philosophical compatibility with the Division for Children, Youth and Families. They are engaged in professional development through various venues including a newsletter called Partnership Press.

The E&TP has designed a system that promotes Continuous Quality Improvement. It includes the quarterly analysis of significant quantitative and qualitative data elements, and class observation reports. An annual report representing a compilation of the data is presented to stakeholders.

An important aspect of E&TP's support to New Hampshire's Foster and Adoptive Parents Association (NHFAPA) is the collaboration with the NHFAPA Conference Committee to coordinate the annual New Hampshire Foster and Adoptive Parent statewide conference. In 2016, New Hampshire will be the site of the New England-wide conference for resource parents. The E&TP collects evaluations from the conference, and the below results are the average ratings for the November 2013 NHFAPA Conference.

*Attendees: 67 percent foster parents, 26 percent adoptive parents,  
62 percent evaluation return rate*

*One to Five Likert scale, with one being not at all and five being absolutely:*

- *Were you satisfied with the networking and skill building opportunities at this Conference?* **4.2**
- *Did you find the workshops informative and useful?* **4.6**
- *Were you inspired by the Conference Keynote Presentation?* **4.7**
- *Were you satisfied with the Conference facility?* **4.0**
- *Would you say this Conference has enhanced your ability to provide quality care for children?* **4.2.**

## CASA PARTNERSHIPS

The Division for Children, Youth and Families has continued its contractual relationship with New Hampshire CASA, the statewide agency for Court-Appointed Special Advocates. Through the CASA Training Partnership, Title IV-E training funds have been used to support both pre-service and in-service training of court-appointed volunteers and staff. In addition to supporting delivery of quality training to this key member of the Child welfare system, this contract supports additional collaboration which has been enhanced during the past year through the work to establish the LiLaC group described earlier. This has resulted in identification of additional shared training opportunities across systems. The CASA program also collects and provides training evaluation data as follows:

During the period of August, 2013 through July, 2014, 106 people attended CASA's forty hour initial training; a combination of new GALs, student interns, and staff. These trainings occurred throughout the state and resulted in 96 active CASA/GALs. With few exceptions, nearly 100 percent of the evaluations were completed after training. There were no significant suggestions offered on ways to change/improve the training. In all responses regarding pre-service training, trainees rated the training as completely effective, very effective or effective, with very effective receiving the highest marks. The majority also felt prepared to do the work of a CASA/GAL.



## Service Array

The Division for Children, Youth and Families provides an array of services that are designed to meet the individualized needs of children and families in need of preventive and voluntary services, or those involved with the Child Protective and /or Juvenile Justice Services. The Division continues to measure the value of these services and programs against the ethos and philosophy of the Practice Model and the quality assurance processes in place within the policies and governing practices of the Division.

### PROJECT FIRST STEP

Project First Step involves the co-location of Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselors (LADCs) in the Division's district offices. This program was first initiated as a Title IV-E Demonstration Project from 1999 to 2004. The project has been sustained through Title IV-B and CAPTA funds.

LADCs are involved as consultants with Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Staff to assist in the reduction of the barriers to treatment and access to community-based services and programs. The co-located LADC staff provides ongoing training to staff regarding alcohol or other drug abuse issues and screening techniques. LADCs may provide direct services for parents or caretakers when it is determined that there are issues related to the misuse of alcohol or other drugs (AODA). If there are primary indicators of significant parent or caretaker AODA, LADCs provide a direct substance abuse assessment and initiate referrals to community-based treatment when indicated.

The project is co-located in two district offices: Manchester and the Southern District Office. The program is located in these two district offices due to the needs identified by staff and through the results of Case Practice Reviews. Quantitative data regarding the number of assessments that have a risk indicator pertaining to alcohol or substance use was used to determine the areas of highest need. This program has proven to be an asset in early identification, assessment and case planning for families who have alcohol or substance abuse as a significant factor in their Division for Children, Youth and Families involvement. At this time, the Division has not been able to expand the number of LADCs to other offices but will continue to seek additional resources in effort to have substance abuse services be a shared resource between offices with high needs as well.

In response to Division efforts to improve data collection and qualitative analysis for the LADC program, the Division is constructing a data collection system that will be able to track substance use indicators in cases statewide. The intent is to have solid data to submit with next year's report.

### COMPREHENSIVE FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES (CFSS)

Family support services are delivered as a contractual service, through a network of Family Resources Centers throughout New Hampshire. Services are flexible, integrated and comprehensive and are provided along a continuum, with short and long-term outcomes. The

contracted services are provided along a continuum of three preventive stages; Prevention, Early Intervention and Crisis services.

The array of services include: home visiting, medical and health education, early childhood education, literacy education, family mentoring and advocacy, life and independent living skills training and trauma-informed services. Participation in these programs is voluntary for families with children ages zero to eighteen years, living in/out-of-home situations.

The program is designed to empower and strengthen families by the development of an individualized family services plan, including preventive child care and coordination of community-based services and supportive services that aid in safety planning and family violence prevention services.

Beginning with State Fiscal Year 2015, the Home Visiting New Hampshire (HVNH) program, which until July 1, 2014 resided with Public Health, was integrated into the Comprehensive Family Support Services (CFSS) program. While the CFSS always had a home visiting component, by incorporating the HVNH program it created a much more robust home visiting component that families throughout the state have benefited from.

#### Nine Contracted Agencies

##### *One Program for each DCYF District Office Catchment Area:*

<b>Berlin</b>	Family Resource Center Gorham/Berlin
<b>Claremont</b>	Good Beginnings of Sullivan Country
<b>Concord</b>	Child & Family Services of New Hampshire
<b>Conway</b>	Children Unlimited, Inc.
<b>Keene</b>	Monadnock Family Services
<b>Laconia</b>	Family Resource Center of Central NH
<b>Littleton</b>	Child & Family Services of New Hampshire
<b>Manchester</b>	Child & Family Services of New Hampshire
<b>Southern</b>	Child & Family Services of New Hampshire & Upper Room Family Resource Center
<b>Seacoast</b>	Families First Health & Support Center
<b>Rochester</b>	Community Action Partnership of Strafford County



#### EVALUATING OUTCOMES

Utilizing Title IV-B, subpart 1 funds, the Division for Children, Youth and Families will continue to provide the financial support necessary to offer a technical assistance position to conduct an in-depth analysis of the needs of families participating in family support programs across New Hampshire and of the impact of the programs serving them. The Family Support Outcomes Evaluation measures the impact of strengthening protective factors in all counties in the state. These data provide demographic information as well as reliable information about the impact of family support programs.

The data gathered from the Outcome Survey explores whether or not a direct correlation could be determined between participant satisfaction in the programs and change in protective factors, which are:

- Supportive Relationships;
- Accessing Resources;
- Parental Confidence;
- Sharing Parental Concerns;
- Meeting Family Needs;
- Standing Up for Family Needs; and
- Reducing Family Stress.

The outcomes are used to inform program practice and public policy.

The Comprehensive Family Support Services program is evaluated by the Division for Children, Youth and Families. Under the direction of the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement, the Division for Children, Youth and Families is moving toward a system of outcome-based contracting. Beginning with Comprehensive Family Support, in 2007, the Auditing Specialist worked collaboratively with providers to create a set of standardized outcome measures and design a data collection and reporting system. Outcome areas include:

- Characteristics of target population;
- What are the services needed and at what intensity; and
- Success of the program in avoiding future Division for Children, Youth and Families involvement.

Data are obtained from tracking the graduating class following discharge from a Comprehensive Family Support Services program for three successive years. “Graduating Class” is defined as any child seventeen years old or younger who had left a Comprehensive Family Support Services program and had a treatment plan during and at the conclusion of program participation.

**2014 Comprehensive Family Support Services Data**

Total Families Served = 871

Total Family Members Served = 2,931 (1,664 are children)

54 percent of Families Served have a Single Caregiver

57 percent of Families Served have Mental Health Issues

31 percent of Families have Chronic Health Issues

85 percent of Children Served have Healthy Kids/Child Medicaid Insurance

35 percent of Adults without any Health Insurance

Each year the Division creates a graduating “Class of...” for all discharged children and tracks them for three years.

Comprehensive Family Support Services Program Outcome: To avoid future Division Costs and Services (Out-of-home Placements & Intensive In-Home services)

Program outcomes to date are:

**Class of 2010** for 1,237 graduating children = 91.0 percent continue having no further involvement with the Division (Tracked for 4 successive years)

**Class of 2011** for 1,297 graduating children = 91.2 percent continue having no further involvement with the Division (Tracked for 3 successive years)

**Class of 2012** for 1,199 graduating children = 91.5 percent continue having no further involvement with the Division (Tracked for 2 successive years)

**Class of 2013** for 1,085 graduating children = 93.1 percent continue having no further involvement with the Division (Tracked for 1 successive year)

#### CFSS OUTCOME CONCEPTS

- A. Treatment plan success leads to avoidance of future Division for Children, Youth and Families costs
- B. CLASS of . . .
  - Only Discharged Children
  - Only those with a Treatment Plan
- C. Each State fiscal year generates a new class
- D. Each class will be tracked for three successive years
- E. Avoidance of future costs means capturing those children who are NOT successful
- F. Capture only first event of Division service (no repeats in Year two or Year three)
- G. Success starts out as one hundred percent and lowers as each unsuccessful event is captured

#### CHILD ADVOCACY CENTERS (CAC'S)

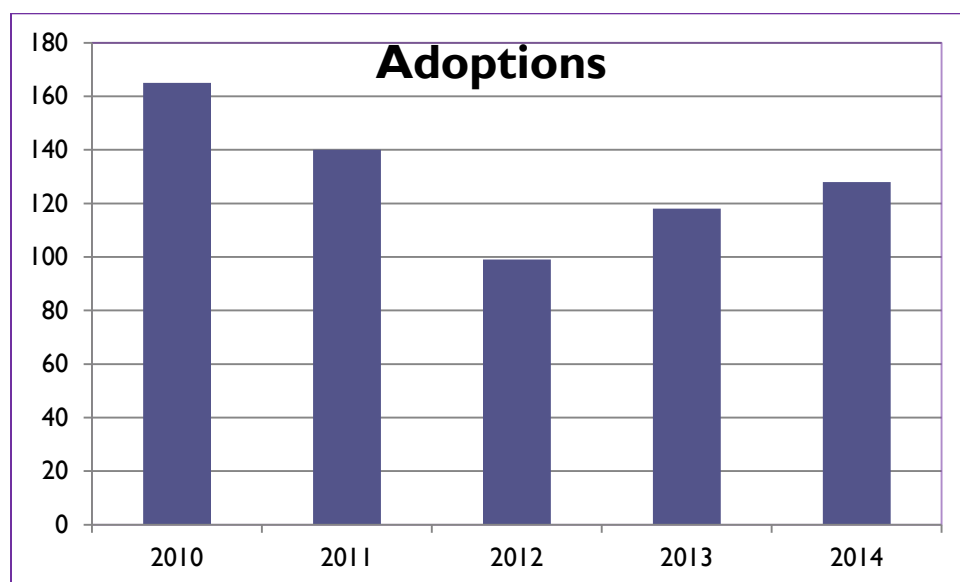
At present there is a Child Advocacy Center in every county throughout the state, with each providing coordinated services to child victims of crime and their families. The centers are part of the state chapter of the Nation Children's Alliance and represent all CAC in their mission to:

- Hold offenders accountable,
- Empower parents to protect and support their children,

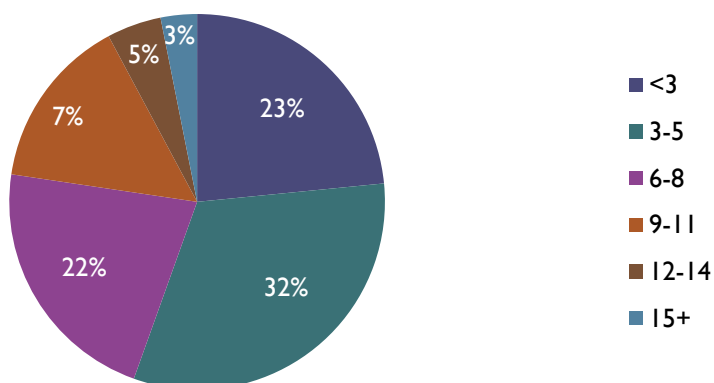
- Provide support for services to meet needs of children and families, and
- Reduce the effects of trauma.

### ADOPTION AND POST-ADOPTION SERVICES

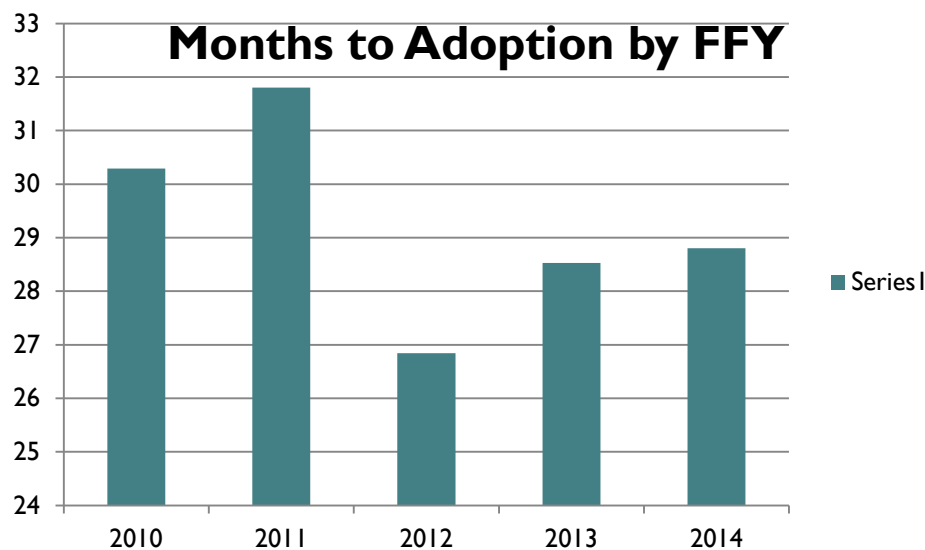
New Hampshire's adoption program is organized through ten Permanency Workers one in each district office and one shared by the two most northern offices, Littleton Tele-work and Berlin. Permanency workers provide oversight and consultation on the pre-adoption cases and are responsible for assuring those cases move forward to adoption. The Adoption Program Supervisor at State Office oversees policy and rules related to both the adoptions completed by the Division and private adoption agencies in the state. The supervisor monitors adoption completions and the provision of adoption subsidy and supervises six staff, some of whom are supported by Title IV-B funds, which provide pre-adoption consultation to families, and staff and post-adoption services, including search services, in-home services, case management, advocacy and information and referral statewide. For the last ten years there has been an emphasis on permanency and the Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) has made gains in achieving timely permanency for children in care.



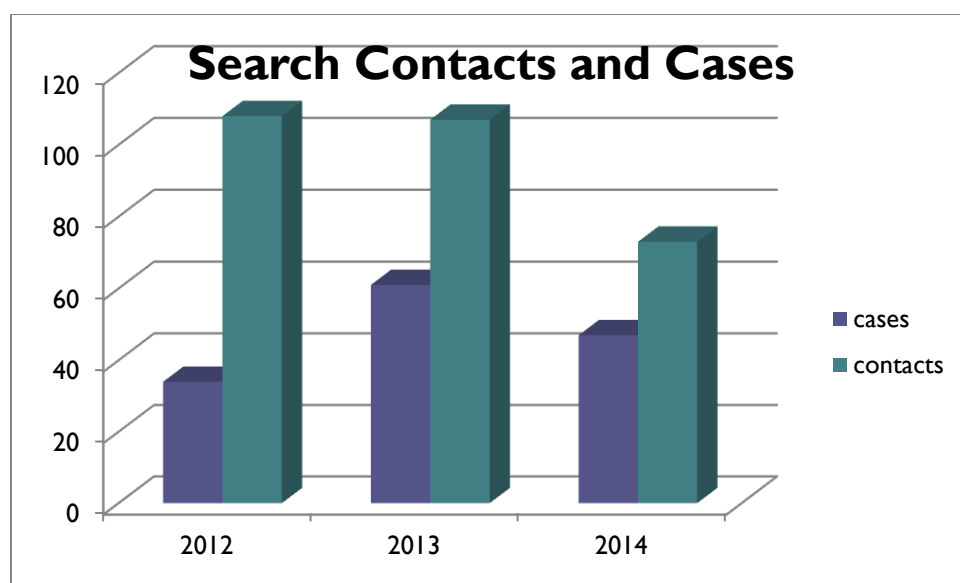
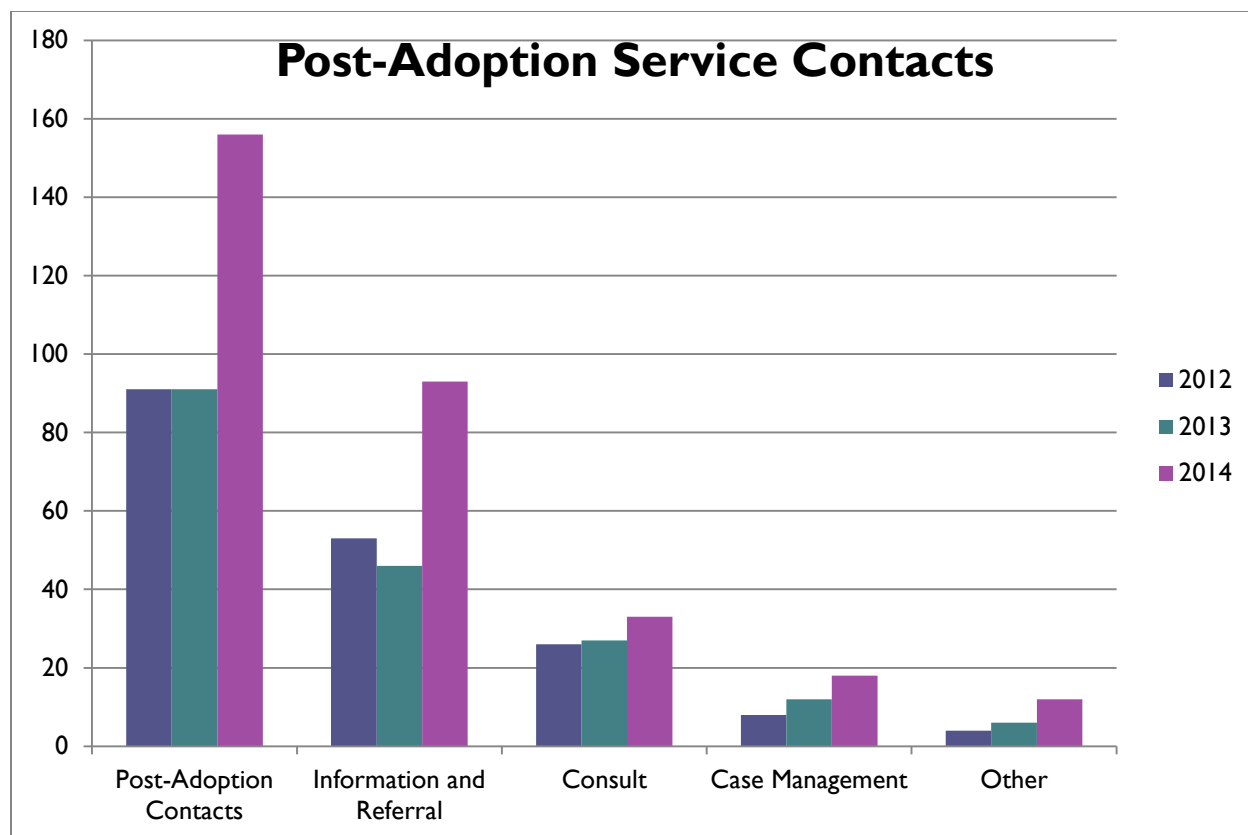
### Adoptions by Age FFY 2014



### Months to Adoption by FFY



The request for post-adoption services including information and referral, case management and consultation has increased dramatically. The Division continues to provide search services to adoptees and biological parents. Those requests have decreased this past year, perhaps because of increased access to information via the internet or social media. The Division will continue to offer these services in accordance with New Hampshire laws and as services to the families that the Division serves. The Adoption Unit has implemented Solution Based Casework in all the interactions with adoptive families and has developed a post-adoption case plan based on Solution Based Casework. The Adoption Unit is creating a survey which will be used to collect data on client satisfaction with post-adoption services. This information will begin to be collected in FFY 2016.



The Division for Children, Youth and Families is utilizing the existing permanency framework and infrastructure to implement practice that specifically addresses evidence-based screening, assessment and treatments to ensure positive well-being outcomes for children who are adopted after experiencing trauma. New Hampshire has been awarded two federal grants, which are being used to fund two projects; The Partners for Change Project and the New Hampshire Adoption Preparation and Preservation Project which will evaluate the current practice, and



services array, upscale promising evidence-based services and practices, and descale those services and practices, which are not producing positive well-being outcomes. These grant initiatives will be continually and rigorously evaluated by outside evaluators as a part of the grants requirements and new practices will be developed that specifically target the needs of the pre and post-adopt population. These practices include:

- Universal, flexible, and ongoing child and family screening and assessment specific to the pre and post-adoption population of children;
- Case planning strategies to address the assessed needs and measure progress specific to the target population;
- Service array reconfiguration to upscale evidence-based treatments specific to the needs of pre and post-adoptive families;
- Up scaling of family assessments for all resource families and a corresponding child matching process to ensure fit when placing children in pre-adoptive homes; and
- Training for resource parents and Division for Children, Youth and Families staff working with pre and post-adoptive families related to trauma and adoption competency.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families seeks to improve screening and assessment of mental health symptoms and child functioning; develop functional outcome measures to inform case planning and measure progress; optimize the use of evidence-based treatments targeted for this specific population including Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Child Parent Psychotherapy, informing all mental health treatment by providing training in adoption competency and improve placement stability and continuity of care through these interventions. Current information is located in the Trauma-Informed Practice Section under New Hampshire Adoption Preparation and Preservation Project (NHAPP). The Division seeks to expand and implement all of the objectives of this project statewide within the next five years which will create improvements in all current pre and post-adoption services including birth and relative care searches, recruitment and retention of quality families, pre and post-adoptive families, home based interventions, home visiting and supportive services for families and adoption subsidy.

Continuous Quality Improvement will be an integral part of these new initiatives. The grant recruitments specify that the project must have rigorous evaluation throughout the five-year process and a sustainability plan to include ongoing monitoring and evaluating. New Hampshire has partnered with outside evaluators who will be working closely with the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement to ensure that the practices are implemented with fidelity and evaluated for ongoing progress and success. Currently Division for Children, Youth and Families staff, resource families, and mental health providers are participating in interviews, focus groups and evaluations to obtain baseline data which will be measured at intervals to monitor changes in practice and improvement in knowledge outcomes. Placement stability, adoptive family satisfaction, staff and resource family knowledge and timeliness to adoption will be monitored throughout the project.

Implementing this initiative over the next five years will include training in a variety of areas. Training in adoption competency, (how to understand, work with and assist adoptive families and their children) will be provided to all Child Welfare Staff, resource parents, and mental health providers. A curriculum will be developed that is specifically for New Hampshire and addresses the particular needs in the state. Training in providing evidence-informed standardized home study and matching processes will be provided to all of the Permanency Staff in each district office (Resource Workers, Permanency Workers, and Permanency Supervisors) as well as staff from Child Placing Agency's across the state. Training on conducting initial screenings and ongoing assessment of both child functioning and mental health symptoms as well as family functioning will be provided to all Child Protective Service Workers. Additional training will assist the staff in understanding how to utilize the screening and assessment data to inform case planning and measure outcomes. Through the Partners for Change Project (Partners for Change), also described in the Trauma-Informed Practice Section, training will be provided to Child Protective Services staff, Juvenile Justice Staff, and resource families on the impact of trauma on children and families, the effects of vicarious trauma on the staff working with the families and how to address and mitigate the effects.

#### COMMUNITY AND FAITH BASED INITIATIVE (CFBI)

The Community and Faith Based Initiative (CFBI) is a subgroup of the New Hampshire DHHS Commissioners Advisory Group on Adoption. The Division for Children, Youth and Families holds a contract with Bethany Christian Services and they have been providing services since 2005. Purpose of the contract is to collaborate with the Division for Children, Youth and Families to develop and implement foster/adoptive family celebrations which focus attention on May, as National Foster Care Month and November as National Adoption Month. Bethany Christian Services, Faithfully One-by-One, provides recruitment and retention activities to the twelve district offices throughout the state. In 2015 CFBI referred 40 Individuals to the Division who were interested in Foster Care.

The contractor provides community and faith based organization with Division for Children, Youth and Families specific information regarding becoming a foster/adoptive parent and services and supports that are available to families contemplating or actively pursuing the foster/adoptive parent processes. In addition, the contractor provides consultation and coordination of outreach activities for Division for Children, Youth and Families Resource and Permanency Staff.

Approximately 800 individuals are on lists to receive the newsletters and email blasts sent out as a part of the ongoing efforts to assist with needs of foster and adoptive families. Through these efforts over 5000 children were served by having specific needs met including beds, mattresses, holiday gifts, school supplies and home renovations needed to initiate or renew foster home licenses. Many additional individuals and organizations participate as volunteers for various events such as the Foster Adoptive Parent Appreciation Event, Operation Christmas Joy and Faith Forums. More than 300 individuals, including 180 children participate in the Appreciation Event each May. These events involve people of all faiths organizations and gifts are given to children to make their Christmas wishes come true.

Currently CFBI has three part-time staff to cover the State and the Division for Children, Youth and Families' needs to build capacity within the Division in effort to better meet the needs of children and families who could benefit from the services provided by this contract.

### FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION SERVICES

Since 1997, New Hampshire has benefited from having co-located Family Violence Prevention Specialists (FVPS) in each district office. This program is funded through Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) funds, the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA) as well as Title IV-B funds.

The FVPS program is an ongoing partnership with the New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence (NHCADSV) who provide staff from local crisis centers to work in the district offices providing case consultation, direct services and referrals for families experiencing the co-occurrence of domestic violence and child maltreatment.

SFY 14 Data FVPS Statewide Activities	
Hot Line / Crisis calls	7,547*
Individual Counseling	53,847*
Group Counseling	560*
Community Education (# adults)	15,268*
Community Education (# children)	17,367*

\* Table indicates total number of children and families served by member agencies throughout the state

### FOSTER CARE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Please refer to Section Two under [“Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention”](#) for further information.

## Agency Responsiveness to the Community

### ENGAGEMENT WITH INCARCERATED PARENTS

The Division for Children, Youth and Families has sustained the commitment to assuring incarcerated parents; particularly incarcerated mothers are engaged and actively involved in planning for the care, supervision and permanency planning for their children. The Administrator for Child Protection and Juvenile Justice Services participated on the Interagency Council created by Senate Bill 262. Regular meetings with women at the Goffstown women's prison have been ongoing over the past six years and in 2013 these meetings began to be coordinated with Family Connections Center programming that takes place at the prison. These meetings continue to provide an opportunity to educate the women about the Division's role and responsibility for permanency planning for their children and to educate them about the services

available to them. The Division for Children, Youth and Families Liaison also makes every effort to provide women not involved with the Division with information about ways that they can continue to maintain contact with their children.

### RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT REFORM

Although the formal work under the “*Framework for Collaboration*” concluded at the end of the previous Child and Family Services Plan cycle, relationships have been established at the local levels resulting in the ongoing collaboration between the Division for Children, Youth and Families and the residential providers that ensures the goals developed over the past several years are still achieved. Furthermore, the Division for Children, Youth and Families’ Residential Certification Program Specialist participates on a newly established Youth Transition to Permanency committee with residential providers. This committee addresses several of the issues, policies and rules pertaining to residential placement for youth in care. Specifically, New Hampshire continues to work with residential providers to adjust their programming to meet the needs of youth, particularly as the Division looks toward serving seventeen year olds through Juvenile Justice Services Delinquency Cases effective July 1, 2015.

### MODEL COURT PROJECT

Since 2008 the Division for Children, Youth and Families has been a key partner in the development of protocols and practices designed to assure better outcomes for children and youth involved in the Child Protective Services System. Early on the Concord and Franklin Courts were identified as Model Court sites. The partnership that has been established between the judges, court staff, CASA and the Division has resulted in Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) and Adoption protocols, Children and Youth in Court protocols and most recently APPLA (Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement) protocols.

In June 2010, the new Adoption and TPR protocols were piloted in the Concord and Franklin Family Courts. Although the initial plan had been to expand the protocols statewide this became difficult when a legislative change removed the opportunity for parents to have legal representation in abuse and neglect cases. Elements of these protocols have been utilized in other courts such as timelier filing of TPR petitions. The June 2013 legislative session did result in the appropriation of funds to reinstate the assignment of legal representation for parents in abuse and neglect cases. It is planned that the Model Court Project will revisit the opportunity to expand the TPR and Adoption protocols to other jurisdictions in the future.

Since 2011, the Model Court Project has focused on two primary goals:

- **Participation of children and youth in court.** The Model Court will encourage the meaningful participation of children and youth in court hearings and will develop protocols that promote this practice.
- **Improving APPLA (Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement)** as a permanency goal to ensure that this is the most appropriate goal and that youth who leave the Child Welfare System have a stronger permanent connection with a primary caring adult and are better prepared for adult living.

The Model Court Executive Committee approved the Children and Youth in Court Protocols in June 2011. Since then training has been provided statewide for court staff and Judges, CASA and Division staff, as well as stakeholders in every jurisdiction across the State. The Children and Youth in Court Protocols were fully integrated into Division, court, and CASA practice statewide in February 2013.

The most recent data regarding the implementation of the *Children and Youth in Court Protocols* demonstrate that these protocols are achieving the outcomes anticipated when they were developed:

- Seventy-three percent of children and youth attended hearings they were invited to attend;
- Ninety-two percent of youth who attended court felt encouraged and supported to attend hearings;
- Eighty-three percent of foster parent or relative caregivers felt adequately prepared for court hearings;
- Ninety-one percent of foster parents or relative caregivers knew that the child or youth was invited to attend court; and
- Eighty-six percent of foster parents knew what to expect at the hearing.

The draft Protocols Relative to RSA 169-C Post-Permanency Hearings for Older Youth with a Permanency Plan of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) were finalized by the APPLA Subcommittee in August 2013 and subsequently approved by the Model Court Executive Committee. Recently, however, as a result of the piloting of the Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement Protocols, in conjunction with the recent federal legislation pertaining to Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement, the protocols were updated. The protocols establish that Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement as a permanency plan consists of four (4) parts:

- Identifying a Primary Caring Adult (with whom the youth may or may not live upon case closure);
- Identifying Important Family Members;
- Other Supportive Persons; and
- The Youth's Current and Post-Case Closure Plans for:
  - Safe and Stable Place to Live;
  - Education;
  - Employment/Job Training; and
  - Health.

Each of the four parts is integral to an Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement Permanency Plan for an older youth, and each should be addressed concurrently with the other parts. DCYF is currently revising the court report used in APPLA Cases to reflect the requirements of the federal legislation to assure that the permanency report reflects the four parts identified above.

To assess the outcomes of the APPLA Protocols an evaluation has been developed with an independent researcher from Plymouth State University contracted with the New Hampshire Court Improvement Project (CIP)/Administrative Office of the Courts, to gather information from post-permanency court hearing, key stakeholder interviews and focus groups with judges, marital masters, court staff, CASA and Division staff and interviews with current older youth with Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement as their permanency plan.

The Model Court Executive Committee has reviewed the results of this evaluation to finalize the protocols. Training will be provided in October 2015. Statewide implementation of the Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement Protocols will be achieved by the end of 2015.

### ISO RECRUITMENT MEETINGS

ISO (Individual Service Option) recruitment meetings occur on a monthly basis and look at children who need recruitment for ISO level families. These meetings give workers the opportunity to provide additional information about the child's likes, interests, and needs to the ISO agencies to facilitate the recruitment for permanent families. These meetings tend to give ISO agencies a more accurate and personalized picture of the child who is in need of a family. In 2012, these meetings expanded to allow the youth to come and present themselves and express their desire for a family. There has been an increased focus on including youth involved in the Juvenile Justice System in ISO meetings in order to expand recruitment efforts and look at establishing permanent connections for all children involved with the Division for Children, Youth and Families.

### NEW ENGLAND YOUTH PERMANENCY CONVENING

Although the formal Permanency Convenings have ended, the New England Youth Coalition (NEYC) continues to meet as a result of the convenings. With the support of the New England Association of Child Welfare Commissioners and Directors, the NEYC is doing significant work on establishing normalcy guidelines for youth in care.

### PERMANENCY PLANNING FOR YOUTH INVOLVED WITH CHILD PROTECTION AND JUVENILE JUSTICE

As part of the Division's annual work plan with Casey Family Programs, the Division established a strategy aimed at achieving better permanency outcomes for youth involved with Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Services committed to the Sununu Youth Services Center (SYSC). Casey Family Programs contracted with the 3P Consulting group to conduct file reviews, targeted interviews, and focus groups on a select number of youth cases with the goal of providing permanency practice recommendations for this population to the Division for Children, Youth and Families.



During the past year, the Division for Children, Youth and Families has begun utilizing some of the tools that have been provided and are following the recommendations made in order to improve permanency planning for youth committed to the Sununu Youth Services Center. To further support the implementation of the 3P recommendations, in early 2015 the Division for Children, Youth and Families has hired a new Permanency Program Specialist, who is based at the Sununu Youth Services Center to be actively involved in ensuring stronger permanency planning and better permanency outcomes for all youth involved with the Division for Children, Youth and Families, including Sununu Youth Services Center.

#### PARENT PARTNER PROGRAM

Funds from Title IV-B and CAPTA grants support the Division's efforts to utilize parent leaders as partners in improving Child Welfare outcomes for children and their families. Funds are utilized to honor and compensate parent leaders for their time and commitment as it is outlined in the New Hampshire Partnership Capacity Building Strategy below.

#### PARTNERSHIP CAPACITY BUILDING STRATEGY

- Create and disseminate a clear and compelling vision that parent voice is important and parent leaders are valued partners by DCYF staff and community partners;
- Implement the parent leader recruitment and retention plan on an ongoing basis;
- Implement the plan to assess parents' readiness to partner with the Division and match them with appropriate roles;
- Continue to establish and communicate clear roles and responsibilities for parent leaders;
- Continue to provide training and leadership growth opportunities for parent leaders;
- Continue to honor and compensate parent leaders for their time and commitment;
- Continue to provide routine supervision, feedback, and support to parent leaders; and
- Continue to promote parent voice and leadership with providers and community partners.

#### CORE DOMAIN AREAS OF THE PROGRAM SUPPORTED BY THIS FUNDING

- Parent Leader Recruitment Activities;
- Parent Leader Skill Building Activities;
- Partnership Tools and Strategy Building Activities;
- Honoraria for parent leaders serving as practice advisors and training partners; and
- Honoraria for parent leaders providing peer-to-peer support to parents new to the system.

#### PARENT PARTNER PROGRAM ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED BY THIS FUNDING

- Meet and Greet sessions where parents with system experience are invited to district offices to meet Division staff and learn about the Parent Partner Program;

- Strategic Sharing Workshops designed to help parents who want to partner with the Division for Children, Youth and Families learn skills to tell their stories in a meaningful, focused, and safe way;
- Better Together Workshop designed to teach Division staff, foster parents, and community partners the value of working in authentic partnership with parents; and
- Honoraria to support parent leaders actively partnering with the Division, serving as practice advisors, team members, training partners and consultants.

#### UPDATE – JUNE 2015

- There have been monthly Better Together Workshops involving birth parents, foster parents, Division staff and community partners. In this past year over 200 participants attended and learned how to work in authentic partnership with parents;
- Each district office has a well-established “Better Together Team”. These Better Together Teams are family engagement action teams charged with promoting family voice and inclusion at the field level. The teams have been meeting regularly to plan activities and initiatives that support family engagement in Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Services;
- Parent leader recruitment and retention has now been integrated into the Division’s practice. The Division for Children, Youth and Families developed and adopted a “Parent Leadership Policy” to guide the field in this area. The policy established an expectation that all staff participate in this recruitment process;
- The Division for Children, Youth and Families has built a strong statewide network of parent leaders. Parents are involved at all levels of the Division bringing their perspective to inform practice discussions, policy development and program improvement. Parent leaders are serving as training partners to train Division for Children, Youth and Families Field Staff, foster parents, and staff. Parent leaders also are providing peer-to-peer support in some selected district offices as a pilot;
- Parents also serve on the Statewide Steering Committee providing oversight to the Parent Partner Program and being champions of this way of including family members; and
- Parent leaders are also serving as “practice advisors” participating in panels and theme-based practice discussions with field staff on such topics as “safety planning with families when substance abuse is present”. These practice discussions create an opportunity for parent leaders to be visibly present at the district offices and actively participate in the process of improving practice from the ground up through dialogues and conversations and planning and testing changes to positively improve practice.

#### OUTCOMES:

- Parent voice and perspective is evident at all levels of practice as evidenced by the number of parent leaders who are active at local teams, committees, and networks;
- Division culture has shifted significantly as evidenced by the way the field is now embracing parents as partners in this work;

- Staff have greater awareness of what is like to be involved with the Division and have been shifting practice to build greater trust and transparency as they meet families; and
- Families are also shifting their perspective regarding the Division: fear and shame is giving way to healing and pride.

#### FOSTER CARE HEALTH PROGRAM

Since November of 2009, the Division for Children, Youth and Families has two Foster Care Health Nurses that are available to each district office as consultants for any family involved with the Division, either during the assessment phase or after a case has been opened. Each child receives a comprehensive health and developmental assessment within thirty days following placement. The Foster Care Health Nurses act as healthcare program managers to ensure that every child in relative or foster placement has their medical, behavioral, and dental health needs met. The Foster Care Health Nurses also act as healthcare coordinators for children in care who have complicated health care needs to ensure that their medical needs are being met effectively and to collaborate with community providers to ensure positive health outcomes.

#### NEW HAMPSHIRE FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT ASSOCIATION (NHFAPA)

The Division has always recognized and appreciated that the best recruitment tool for new foster and adoptive families is a well-supported network of foster or adoptive families. The Division continues to have a strong collaborative relationship with the New Hampshire Foster and Adoptive Parent Association (NHFAPA) and the Division for Children, Youth and Families values the hard work and commitment of the parents actively involved with this Association who offer peer support to fellow families and work hard to recruit new families to serve children in need. In years past the association benefitted from a support and technical assistance contract that was awarded to and managed by an outside contractor. These funds allowed the association to cover their basic operating costs, contribute to their fall training conference and support a part-time staff. The funding for this contract was diverted to other projects in June of 2011. Since then, NHFAPA has had difficulties in maintaining leadership and fundraising.

Through other connections developed for recruitment purposes, the Division has arranged for NHFAPA to be the recipient of some fundraising opportunities. Wendy's Restaurant offered to help support the production of "Home At Last", the Division's child specific recruitment partnership with "NH Chronicle". They offered to hold a fund raiser to highlight the show and support NHFAPA. The Foster Care Manager is in the beginning talks with a New Hampshire based Ski Resort who is interested in holding an annual charity race and event to support foster and adoptive families in the state. If this comes to fruition, NHFAPA would be the identified non-profit recipient of any funds raised.

The Division would like for the association to return to a strong and viable resource for the foster and adoptive families in New Hampshire and is working with them to explore other supports or opportunities that might be available to them.

## COMPREHENSIVE FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES (CFSS)

Please refer to [Comprehensive Family Support Services](#) in Section Two under “Service Array” for further description.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE CHILDREN’S TRUST

The Division for Children, Youth and Families maintains a strong relationship with the New Hampshire Children’s Trust, Inc. (NHCT) whose mission is to prevent child abuse and neglect in New Hampshire. In 1996, the NHCT was designated as the lead agency to receive and distribute CAPTA Title II (Community-based Family Resource and Support) funds. Currently, the organization receives approximately \$200,000, an amount that is based on the state’s child population. The NHCT braids the yield from its endowment and other contributions with the CBCAP funds and makes grants through a competitive process to community-based programs. Criteria for receiving a grant from the NHCT include:

- **Primary prevention.** The highest priority of the New Hampshire Children’s Trust, Inc. is to support programs designed to promote the general welfare of all children and families before abuse or neglect occurs. Programs are accessible to everyone, but may target populations at risk for abuse and neglect. Programs focus on education and training in child development, parenting, and skill building for parents. They may also include health and developmental screenings to identify children at risk and general information and referral services.
- **System building.** The New Hampshire Children’s Trust, Inc. is particularly interested in funding programs that are a part of a community-wide plan to improve the child and family service system.
- **Building program capacity.** The New Hampshire Children’s Trust, Inc. is committed to helping programs develop stronger boards, well-trained staff, and effective organizations. Up to thirty percent of a grant request may be used to build the long-term capacity of the program.
- **Under-served communities.** Many New Hampshire communities lack basic family-centered, family support programs and services. The New Hampshire Children’s Trust, Inc. solicits proposals for new projects in communities where resources for these programs are lacking or where funding has been significantly disproportional with other communities in the state.
- **Building Public Support for Community-Based Prevention Programming.** The New Hampshire Children’s Trust, Inc. is committed to ongoing efforts, through the legislative process, to once again bring support for prevention programming to the communities throughout the state.

New Hampshire Children’s Trust, Inc. is a key partner with the Division’s Bureau of Community and Family Supports and a co-lead with the Child Development Bureau in the Strengthening Families Initiative. Finally, the Administrator of the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement and a representative from the Department of Health and Human Services’

Bureau of Maternal and Child Health are members of the Board of Trustees. The Division looks forward to an ongoing relationship in the coming years.

### STRATEGIC PLAN

The New Hampshire Children's Trust has developed a five-year strategic plan focusing on eliminating child abuse and neglect in the most vulnerable population, children under age three. The strategic plan has six overarching goals with specific objectives. Each employee is responsible for implementing a work plan to support progress on the strategic plan. As part of the Continuous Quality Improvement process, employees review outputs and outcomes monthly and report on high level dashboard measures to the board of directors at least semi-annually.

### 2012 – 2016 GOALS

1. **Reach** all New Hampshire families during pregnancy through age 3 with proven effective strategies that prevent child abuse and neglect.
2. **Advocate** for the best possible New Hampshire policies, plans, systems, data, resources, training and coordination for prevention.
3. **Increase** public awareness of child abuse and neglect in New Hampshire and how it can be prevented.
4. **Lead** the development of the New Hampshire State Plan for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect.
5. **Bring** prevention resources to New Hampshire from outside and inside.
6. **Build** the sustainable organization's capacity to achieve the goals of the strategic plan.<sup>2</sup>

### DIVISION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES EDUCATION SERVICES AND SUPPORT

The work of the Division's former education specialists over the past year has been involved in case consultation, training, and informing policy development, school districts, courts et al. and state level Department of Education (DoE) staff and will continue this effort.

The Division recognizes the importance of providing services of the education specialist to the population of the Sununu Center (SYSC). The Division currently has a published Request for Application (RFA) seeking a replacement for the current education specialist. Beginning this next fiscal year, State Fiscal Year 2016, the education specialist will be providing part-time consultation to the youth at the Sununu Youth Services Center.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families will continue its involvement in key statewide initiatives. First, there is the collaboration with others in the Court Improvement Project's

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.nhchildrenstrust.org/strategic-plan>

Education Protocol subcommittee. New Hampshire assembled a team of professionals to work diligently to remove barriers to educational successes for children and families.

The education stability committee continues to work to implement the changes that have been authorized through the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The Division continues its work with the Department of Education to strategically interface with the current statutes that create barriers for data sharing and determine a means by which data can be meaningfully shared between DoE and the Division for Children, Youth and Families.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families will continued to mine education data to determine compliance with the Fostering Connections Legislation by determining the number of children that are currently in out-of-home placement inside their sending School Administrative Unit as well as determined to be in the most educationally appropriate setting based upon the needs of the child and family. The Division anticipates adding funding with Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Dollars to this program to ensure ongoing compliance with the Fostering Connections Legislation.

#### COORDINATION WITH TRIBES

Please refer to Section Five “Consultation and Coordination between States and Tribes” for further information.

#### FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION SPECIALIST (FORMERLY DVS) PROGRAM

Please refer to Family Violence Prevention Services in Section Two under “Service Array” for further description.

#### HEAD START STATE COLLABORATION OFFICE

The Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) is funded by the United States Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start to improve long-term outcomes for income-eligible young children (aged birth to five years), their families and pregnant women. As specified in the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, HSSCOs are required to facilitate collaboration among Head Start/Early Head Start agencies and entities that serve children from birth to school entry and their families with low incomes. Resources from the HSSCO grant are used to create, support and sustain collaborative relationships and initiatives among Head Start and state and community partners in six priority areas established by the Head Start Act and revised by the Office of Head Start in January 2015. Included are:

1. Partnering with state child care systems emphasizing the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Initiatives;
2. Working with state efforts to collect data regarding early childhood programs and child outcomes;
3. Supporting the expansion and access of high quality, workforce and career development opportunities for staff;



4. Collaborating with the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System;
5. Working with state school systems to ensure continuity; and
6. Addressing regional priorities in the areas of health care (physical, oral, mental health); education (transition to and alignment with public school); services to families who are homeless; services to children with disabilities; child care; child and family welfare/assistance (two areas), family literacy, community services, and early childhood systems building.

The work of the Head Start State Collaboration Office is firmly integrated with that of other Division for Children, Youth and Families Bureaus by braiding funds, sharing resources, allocating staff time to shared initiatives, and targeting common goals and outcomes within the respective federal plans. As a result, substantial progress was made during the past year in at least three priority areas that are highlighted next: 1) Early Childhood and Family Mental Health; 2) Developmental Screening through Watch Me Grow; and 3) Early Childhood Systems Building.

#### EARLY CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH

Four Division Bureau Administrators (Head Start State Collaboration Office, Child Development, Well-Being, and Community and Family Support) serve on the New Hampshire Department of Education's Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant State Management Team, as well as in various workgroups. As Early Childhood Workgroup leader, the HSSCO Administrator supported the three Safe Schools/Healthy Students early childhood coordinators to begin a developmental screening initiative in their districts, starting with screening children's social/emotional development using the ASQ-Social Emotional questionnaires. Additionally, the project is on track to ensure that at least two early childhood professionals in each participating school district area receive their Early Childhood and Family Mental Health (ECFMH) credential before the end of the grant period, and thus, increase access to quality ECFMH services for New Hampshire's young children and families. Four professionals in the Rochester School District area will receive their credential by summer 2015.

#### DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING, REFERRAL AND PARENT INFORMATION VIA WATCH ME GROW

Watch Me Grow (WMG) supports New Hampshire families of children from birth through five years of age to "ensure their child's brightest future" through voluntary developmental screening, referral to resources and parent education on developmental milestones and red flags. Funding and resources from the New Hampshire State Library Family Resource Connection and the following three DHHS Divisions are blended to support system implementation in the Division's contracted family resource centers throughout the State: Division for Children, Youth and Families (Bureau of Community and Family Support Services with Title IV-B and CAPTA grants, Child Development Bureau and Head Start State Collaboration Office); Public Health, Maternal and Child Health; and Community-based Care Services – Developmental Services (Family Centered Early Supports and Services, or early intervention).

During the past year:

- The Division for Children, Youth and Families identified funding for a part-time Watch Me Grow state coordinator (to be hired in Summer 2015), which will greatly facilitate the state's capacity to further develop, implement and monitor the system;
- The Spark New Hampshire, Early Childhood Advisory Council's Early Childhood Policy Blueprint recommendations included support for the Watch Me Grow system as a key service for New Hampshire's young children and families;
- As noted previously, Watch Me Grow expanded its partnerships with school districts via the Safe Schools, Healthy Students grant project;
- The Bureau of Well-Being provided funding to create online access to Watch Me Grows developmental screening tools (Ages & Stages Questionnaires-3 and Ages and Stages Questionnaires – Social Emotional) for families by August 2015; and
- As shown in the table below, Watch Me Grow has steadily increased the number of screenings conducted each year and the number of children screened. Additionally, when considered together, the percentage of children being referred or scheduled for a recheck from 2010 to date is relatively consistent with the estimated prevalence of developmental and behavioral concerns in U.S. children (twelve percent – sixteen percent).

Watch Me Grow Screenings and Results by Calendar Year and Total from Data Base Establishment to Present:

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2010-15**
<b>Total Screenings</b>	529	816	2,044	2,428	6,408
<b>Children (unduplicated)</b>	451	677	1,362	1,615	3,988
<b>Referred*</b>	22%	6%	8%	10%	9%
<b>Recheck*</b>	10%	10%	13%	12%	12%

\*Rounded to the nearest percent

\*\*As of May 22, 2015

### EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS BUILDING

The Head Start State Collaboration Office dedicated considerable time over the past year to the development of an early childhood system in New Hampshire through the work of Spark New Hampshire, governor-appointed Early Childhood Advisory Council ([www.sparknh.org](http://www.sparknh.org)). The HSSCO Administrator serves on the Council, the Executive Committee, and the Quality, Data, and Evaluation Committees. The HSSCO Administrator also led the New Hampshire Early Childhood Professional Development (ECPD) System's Financing Workgroup, which generated recommendations to establish and sustain a cross-sector Early Childhood Professional

Development system in the state. Lastly, Head Start State Collaboration Office partnered with the New Hampshire Department of Education to conduct New Hampshire Kindergarten Readiness Indicators forums throughout the state and plan an Early Childhood strand for the 2015 Educators' Summer Summit (which is being offered for the first time).

#### SYSTEM OF CARE AND THE MEDICAID 1915(i) STATE PLAN AMENDMENT

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services received a four year grant to develop and implement a System of Care (SOC) model of practice and intervention that is nationally known to serve this population of children and youth more effectively and efficiently. This grant helped to establish the infrastructure of a System of Care and a program that utilizes the SOC approach and high fidelity wraparound model of practice. The Division has been the lead agency for this work for the past two years. The infrastructure development has included the identification of a hub or Care Management Entity model, the identification of a high fidelity wraparound model, the development of program processes and procedures, curriculum and training procurement, service array development, provider network, evaluation and sustainability.

The program developed from this grant is called FAST Forward and is a program designed to meet the needs of children and youth with Severe Emotional Disturbance and who are at risk for multi-agency involvement. The program is designed to not only provide high fidelity wraparound in a manner consistent with System of Care values and principles but also braids services and funding from across the department to create an enhanced service array for these high need children and youth and their families. The goal is to prevent this group of children and youth from needing to come into the Division for Children, Youth and Families care and court intervention unnecessarily. Currently, children and youth with an open and active Division case through either Child Protective Services or Juvenile Justice Services is excluded from the FAST Forward program. Over the past year of implementation the program has been able to serve up to twenty children and youth, many of whom would have been eligible for services through the CHINS program, which would have required court involvement. The FAST Forward program has enabled many of the enrolled children and youth to avoid such a high level intervention and to keep the children and youth in their own home and community.

The work and program developed under this grant does require a sustainability plan for long term implementation and expansion. The Department is currently working with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to develop a new Medicaid authority. The Medicaid option New Hampshire is developing is under the 1915(i) State Plan Amendment option for Home and Community-Based Care. This option is part of the national technical assistance given for System of Care Grantees as a viable option for sustainability. This will be a comprehensive Medicaid Home and Community-Based benefit plan for this population of children and youth in order to meet their high level of needs in a more effective manner. DCYF hopes to include Sununu Youth Services Center as a Medicaid reimbursable treatment facility as a part of the benefit package of the 1915(i).

### DIVISION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES OVERSIGHT PANELS

The Division for Children, Youth and Families supports the functions of a variety of oversight panels including the Citizen's Review Panel and the Division for Children, Youth and Families Advisory Board. In combination, these groups meet the requirements of CAPTA and Title IV-B, in addition to New Hampshire statutory requirements. Their membership is diverse and includes representation from community members, school personnel, CASA, foster parents, attorneys, group home staff, representatives from prevention programs, and other professionals who have involvement with or knowledge of the Division for Children, Youth and Families.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families Director attends each group's meetings as often as possible, and the Bureau of Well-Being provides a liaison to each. The role of the liaison is not to drive the agendas of any group, but to provide information on Division for Children, Youth and Families Programs, including identified areas needing improvement or issues that a particular group may be interested in addressing.

### THE DIVISION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES ADVISORY BOARD

The Division for Children, Youth and Families Advisory Board had been a requirement of the New Hampshire Legislature, RSA 170-G: 6. Following the New Hampshire Legislative Session in 2014, the Board was required to sunset. Since then, however, there has been a legislative proposal to reinstate the DCYF Advisory Board. The legislation is still pending, but the Board members have continued to actively meet on a monthly basis as a function of the Citizen's Review Panel.

Topics presented to and discussed by the Board in SFY 2015 have included:

- Review of the Child and Family Services Plan goals;
- Participation in the Concord District Office Case Practice Review in December 2014;
- DCYF certification and service array presentations for both residential and community-based services;
- DCYF legislative updates; and a
- Field visit to the Sununu Youth Services Center in Manchester, New Hampshire.

After the presentations the Board determines how they will proceed with that particular issue in their ongoing advising and assisting in improving Division for Children, Youth and Families Practice.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families continues to work with the Board to address membership and recruitment concerns during the monthly meetings. A membership subcommittee provides sustained attention to developing a comprehensive, well-rounded Board.

### THE CITIZEN'S REVIEW PANEL

In April 2011, the Citizen's Review Panel (CRP) merged with the Division for Children, Youth and Families Advisory Board. Each Board has kept its own identity and mission; however their efforts have been merged and focused on having a more powerful impact on Child Welfare Practice. The purpose of the CRP is to determine how effectively the Division for Children, Youth and Families is discharging its Child Protection responsibilities.

The Citizen's Review Panel is required to review the compliance of the Division for Children, Youth and Families in the discharge of its duties with respect to the following:

- The State CAPTA Plan;
- Coordination with Title IV-E foster care and adoption programs;
- Activities associated with CFSR;
- Participation in the Division for Children, Youth and Families Case Practice Review Process;
- Participation in debriefings on Quality Assurance Specific Case Reviews; and
- Other criteria the panel considers important.

In the event that a fatality or near fatality occurs that is connected to a Division for Children, Youth and Families Case or Assessment, the Division's Field Services Bureau Chief engages in a critical incident review. The results of this review are shared with the CRP upon request.

The 2015 Citizen's Review Panel Annual Report is included in the Division for Children, Youth and Families CAPTA State Plan.

### NEW HAMPSHIRE YOUTH VOICES

The Division for Children, Youth and Families Youth Advisory Board, now known as New Hampshire Youth Voices, is composed of young adults currently and previously in out-of-home care. The Board's mission is "making a difference for youth in care by voicing opinions for positive change". The Board has a regional board structure with five regional boards meeting monthly to work on a variety of projects of interest to youth in care. On a quarterly basis all the groups meet together to review progress and plan for the future. This structure has increased the level of youth participation as well as bolstered the community connection. As of the writing of this report there are over twenty-five active members of New Hampshire Youth Voices.

The board conducts an annual teen conference for Division youth. The board's accomplishments over the past year include creation of a Bill of Rights for youth in care, the conducting of the annual teen conference in partnership with the Division for Children, Youth and Families, advising on the Practice Model, advising on Division policies and practices and participating in trainings and workshops. Members of New Hampshire Youth Voice have also been actively involved in the New England Youth Coalition, an advocacy group made up of youth leaders from across the region.

## YOUTH ACTION POOL

Participating in Youth Action Pool (YAP) are current and former youth in care that are motivated, responsible, and committed to positively influencing, changing or improving the Division for Children, Youth and Families current adolescent practice. The purpose of the YAP is for youth to be actively and directly involved in the Division's practice.

To ensure stability and continued growth, the University of New Hampshire, Center for Professional Excellence (UNH CPE) has taken over facilitation of the YAP. This past year YAP members have provided opening remarks at the Division for Children, Youth and Families Conference; co-trained workshops at the Division's Teen Conference, co-trained current youth in care in Strategic Sharing and conducted a workshop at the New Hampshire Transition Summit describing the transition process for foster care to adulthood. A YAP member was recently hired to be on the training staff for Education and Training Partnership at Granite State College, the agency that provides trainings to foster parents, residential staff and relative caregivers. YAP members are currently being trained to provide the keynote presentation and co-present workshops at the upcoming Division for Children, Youth and Families Teen Conference this August.

## THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CHILD FATALITY REVIEW COMMITTEE

The New Hampshire Child Fatality Review Committee (CFRC) was created by Executive Order in 1991. The mission of the Committee is to reduce preventable child fatalities through systemic multidisciplinary review of child fatalities in New Hampshire; through multidisciplinary training and community-based prevention education; and through data-driven recommendations for legislation and public policy.

The Committee membership is comprised of representation from the medical, law enforcement, judicial, legal, victim services, public health, mental health, Child Protection and education communities. The Committee began reviewing cases of child fatalities in January of 1996. After each review the Committee identifies risk factors related to the death and makes recommendations aimed at improving systematic responses in an effort to prevent similar deaths in the future. The Committee provides the recommendations to the participating agencies and asks them to take actions consistent with their own mandates. The Committee publishes the recommendations and the Division's responses to those recommendations in a report.

The most recent (thirteenth) report of the Child Fatality Review Committee is located at:

<http://doj.nh.gov/criminal/victim-assistance/child-fatality-review-committee.htm>

## **Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention**

### STANDARDS FOR FOSTER HOMES – OVERVIEW

Licensing requirements for all New Hampshire Resource Homes are based in the New Hampshire Statute RSA 170-E and governed by Administrative Rule He-C 6446. These standards ensure that children being removed from their families are placed in a safe and



nurturing family setting until they can be reunified or find permanency through adoption, guardianship or another planned permanent living arrangement. The following basic requirements apply for licensing foster, relative and adoptive homes:

- Applicants must complete twenty-one hours of pre-service training and submit references, medical statements and financial information;
- An applicant must be at least age twenty-one, possess a high school diploma or equivalent and must be able to communicate in English;
- An autobiography must be submitted along with copies of birth certificates, and a marriage certificate, if applicable;
- The agency must complete criminal background checks to include fingerprinting and local police checks on all adult household members;
- The agency must complete a Central Registry check on all household members; and
- The home must be deemed safe and pass both a local health and fire inspection.

Because New Hampshire is a dual-licensed state, only one home study is necessary for the purposes of fostering and adopting. The Rule allows that the agency must decide whether to grant a license within 120 days of the date of the completed application. Once issued, a foster care license is valid for no more than two years beyond the expiration of the earliest required safety check. The renewal process includes at least one home visit by the licenser, an updated criminal records check to include a local police check, Central Registry check, and fire inspection. Foster parents must submit a list of trainings that they have attended to meet the training requirement of the license and any additional certification they have requested.

### STANDARDS APPLIED EQUALLY – OVERVIEW

The State ensures that licensing standards are applied equally statewide and to all licensed foster family homes whether the license is managed by the Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) or a Child Placing Agency. Licensing requirements for all New Hampshire Resource Homes are based in the New Hampshire Statute RSA 170-E and governed by Administrative Rule He-C 6446. These standards ensure that children being removed from their families are placed in a safe and nurturing family setting until they can be reunified or find permanency through adoption, guardianship or another planned permanent living arrangement.

Child Placing Agencies also follow the licensing requirements of He-C 6448, which includes that any home they request a license for follows the requirements of He-C 6446. Those agencies providing ISO (Individual Service Option) or Therapeutic Foster Care are additionally following He-C 6355, the Certification for the Payment of Foster Care Programs that includes the same requirement of ensuring that the homes they manage follow He-C 6446. All licensing requests are reviewed by the State Office Resource Worker for completion of the required elements prior to a license being issued.

On occasion, a permit will be issued to a new family who has been identified as the most appropriate resource for a child. This can be requested with approval from a field administrator when it is necessary to place the child before the family can finish all the requirements for

licensing. The permit can be issued for a maximum of six months. All safety requirements, including fingerprinting, must be completed prior to a permit being issued.

The Administrative Rule allows for waivers of the licensing requirements that are not directly related to safety items. This process has been utilized frequently when licensing relative caregivers who faced barriers to meeting the requirements. The most common waiver request is for extended time to finish or alternatives to the pre-service training. DCYF has determined that all criminal record checks, the Central Registry check and the fire and health inspections are crucial to ensuring for the safety of children and will not waive these items.

He-C 6446 not only details the requirements for applicants seeking a foster care license but also outlines the expectations of how a foster family will provide for any child placed in their care. Any suspicion of maltreatment of a child by a foster care provider is referred to Central Intake for a Special Investigation. Incidents of non-compliance that do not involve maltreatment to a child are reported to the Foster Care Manager who will work with the licensor to develop an Order to Comply and recommend appropriate corrective action steps. Families have sixty days to complete a corrective action plan. Failure to take the corrective action can lead to revocation of the license.

#### REQUIREMENTS FOR CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS – OVERVIEW

The New Hampshire “Foster Family Care Licensing Requirements” includes the need to complete local and statewide criminal background checks along with a Central Registry check for any history of abuse and neglect. These are considered to be safety checks and there are no exceptions or waivers allowed for these requirements for a permit or license. All individuals seeking to adopt a child in the State of New Hampshire follow the same rules. Criminal record and Central Registry checks are only valid for two years. A foster care license expires prior to reaching the two-year mark. These checks must be completed again in order to renew a foster care license.

Foster/adoptive applicants and any other adult over twenty-one residing in the home undergo Live Scan fingerprinting with the New Hampshire Department of Safety for an initial license. The applicant calls a specific telephone number to make the appointment. Fingerprinting results are sent via a courier to the Department of Health & Human Services/Division for Children, Youth and Families. Results are copied, tracked, and filed at the DCYF State Office. While a copy of the results is sent to the district offices for the internal licensing files, outside agencies receive a letter from the State Office Resource Worker as to whether or not they can proceed with licensing. The reason for any negative result would not be shared with a Child Placing Agency.

#### DILIGENT RECRUITMENT OF FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE HOMES – OVERVIEW

The Foster Care Program provides licensed resource homes and a family experience for children who cannot be safely cared for in their own homes. The District Office Resource Worker recruits, trains and licenses resource families, matches children in need of out-of-home care with an appropriate family and supports the foster, relative and adoptive parents in their catchment

area. New Hampshire is a dual-licensed state and both foster and adoptive parents follow the same training, assessment and home study process.

Recruitment and Retention responsibilities and activities of the Division are shared with two contract providers. One contract is specifically responsible for developing statewide media campaigns, assistance to the district offices for both general and targeted recruitment and support with retention activities. It is also intended to provide support to the statewide foster and adoptive parent association. Another held by the Community and Faith-Based Initiative focuses more on child specific adoption recruitment, general and targeted recruitment in the faith based community, specific foster family supports, and statewide appreciation events for both foster care and adoption.

Matching the child with a resource home considers the foster or pre-adoptive parent's ability to meet the unique needs of the child and family. DCYF does not delay placement into care due to matching issues and works with community members that represent different cultural, racial or ethnic backgrounds to build and support cultural competency within the resource family pool, and to ensure that resource families are culturally responsive to child(ren)'s needs regardless of whether they have different backgrounds.

Partnering with the community and families is a fundamental philosophy of the Division. Foster and adoptive parents are linked closely to the neighborhoods, communities and cultural, ethnic, and religious groups that make up the community. They work and perform daily activities and contribute to the vitality of the community while serving children in care. The Division has always recognized and appreciated that the best recruitment tool for new foster and adoptive families is a well-supported network of current foster or adoptive families. Development of the plan by local recruitment and retention teams in each district office makes operational the belief that keeping children in their own communities in close proximity to their parents, schools, and other significant people in their lives will enhance the safety and well-being of children. Community placements can also increase the probability that the parents and children will be reunified.

#### DATA CONSIDERATIONS FOR STANDARDS FOR FOSTER HOMES – OVERVIEW

Licensing records are reviewed at least twice prior to licensing to ensure that the necessary requirements are fulfilled. The Permanency Supervisor reviews the entire file for accuracy before it is forwarded with the licensing recommendation to the DCYF State Office. The State Office Resource Worker verifies all safety requirements before obtaining approval for the actual license. A Federal Title IV-E Audit was held in the fall of 2013. All foster home licensing records reviewed were found to contain all of the required elements. An internal KPMG Audit was also held later in the fall of 2013 and again in 2014. The files requested also passed without any concerns. The KPMG Auditors did make a recommendation in 2013 that re-licensing studies more clearly document the dates of the licensor site visit at the home. Administrative Rules in New Hampshire currently have a ten year term. The current Rule was adopted by the Legislature in February of 2015. Training on the new Rule has been delivered to all Resource and Licensing workers. Initial training for new applicants includes a class on the new regulations and all currently licensed families were informed of and provided access to the new Rule.

### DATA CONSIDERATIONS FOR STANDARDS APPLIED EQUALLY – OVERVIEW

Licensing records are reviewed twice prior to licensing to ensure that the necessary requirements are fulfilled. The State Office Resource Worker performs random site visits to each District Office to review licensing files for compliance and attends all site reviews with Child Placing Agencies. Site reviews for agencies providing treatment level foster care are held every two years. A Federal Title IV-E Audit was held in the fall of 2013. All foster home licensing records reviewed were found to contain all of the required elements. The files were a mix of homes managed by DCYF and Child Placing Agencies. KPMG audits were held in both 2013 and 2014.

The Division is required to report to the Children and Family Law Committee of the Legislature every December 31<sup>st</sup> with information about revocations and denials. Between January of 2011 and the present, there have been four license applications denied, four licenses revoked and one appeal of a denial.

### DATA CONSIDERATIONS- REQUIREMENTS FOR CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

A Federal Title IV-E Audit completed in the fall of 2013 showed that criminal background checks and reviews of child maltreatment histories were consistently completed for foster and adoptive parents. FBI Live Scan fingerprint checking began in 2007 as the State complied with the Adam Walsh Act. All applicants seeking a foster home license and any other adult in the home over age twenty-one needed to be fingerprinted. Foster parents who were originally licensed prior to July 1, 2007 and have continuously maintained their licenses do not need to be fingerprinted unless they are proceeding to adopt a child in their care. At the present time, the applicant pays for the cost of the fingerprinting procedures up front but is reimbursed after their license is issued. The Division does not refund the cost to the other adult household members who are not on the license. An FBI audit of the NH State Police was held in 2012. The Division was included as part of this audit as the New Hampshire State Police facilitates fingerprint record checks for foster and adoptive applicants. The Division is responsible for all FBI fingerprint results and must ensure that these records are kept secure. A new audit is scheduled for July 2015.

### DATA CONSIDERATIONS- DILIGENT RECRUITMENT OF FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE HOMES

The overall number of licensed foster homes in the state has decreased by thirty percent over the last five years while the number of children and youth in care has been relatively steady. Foster Care Program Data has shown that the typical foster home of today has a shorter “lifespan” than foster homes who started a decade or more ago. Many foster parents become licensed with the intention of adopting from foster care. Once they have had a successful adoption or two, they close because their family feels complete. They are not remaining open to serve other children in need of short-term care. Some foster homes have closed because they are in disagreement with current practice and the expectations placed upon foster families to engage with and support the birth family and/ or maintain connections with the extended birth family. Some families licensed to adopt close out of frustration that they are not being matched with the children that they desire. Consistent messaging is given to all new potential foster care applicants about the Mission, Beliefs and Principles of the Division and the expectation that the Division and the foster family will work towards reunification together. This has had a clear effect on the rate of

new homes being licensed by the district offices. The Child Placing Agencies who manage ISO Foster Care families have had a similar experience with the slow rate of recruitment and quicker closing of resource homes.

### Licensed Foster Homes

As of April 2011, there were 779 licensed foster homes in New Hampshire

As of April 2015, there were 616 licensed foster homes in New Hampshire.

As of April 2011, thirty-five percent of the licensed foster homes were from Child Placing Agencies.

As of April 2015, twenty four percent of the licensed foster homes were from Child Placing Agencies.

District Office Homes	Apr-11	Apr-12	Apr-13	Apr-14	Apr-15
Berlin	36	29	34	31	33
Claremont	31	21	26	24	29
Concord	37	32	42	46	45
Conway	35	30	33	29	27
Keene	55	49	67	55	38
Laconia	42	41	44	36	44
Littleton	28	24	23	18	14
Manchester	54	48	51	53	56
Southern	58	54	48	50	49
Seacoast	45	52	42	43	38
Rochester	51	46	58	55	47
Telework	34	36	39	30	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>460</b>

Child Placing Agency Homes	Apr-11	Apr-12	Apr-13	Apr-14	Apr-15
Ascentria (Lutheran)	35	25	32	24	27
Casey NH	105	103	0	0	n/a
Casey VT	1	1	0	0	n/a
Child & Family Svc	20	19	32	31	30
Crotched	0	0	5	5	2
Easter Seal	30	20	23	16	14
ISN	16	17	14	26	26
Lakes Region	1	2	2	3	3
LifeShare	31	29	28	25	18
NFI North	3	4	5	4	4
Spaulding	25	30	28	22	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>148</b>

### STRENGTHS FOR STANDARDS FOR FOSTER HOMES – OVERVIEW

All individuals in New Hampshire applying to foster or adopt from foster care follow the same licensing regulations whether they are licensed by the Division or by one of the nine Child Placing Agencies who are certified to provide a higher level of foster care known as either ISO (Individual Service Option) or Therapeutic Foster Care. Pre-service training is required of all applicants and the second module of the training, “Regulations” is dedicated to ensuring potential foster families understand the requirements of the Licensing Rule and the expectations of foster and pre-adoptive families.

Monthly meetings, the Resource Round Up, are held with the Division’s Resource Workers and the Licensing Workers from the Agency Providers. Every meeting includes time set aside to discuss common licensing concerns. Annual refresher training is held for all involved with licensing to review the basics and share tips and strategies to improve practice. Many of the suggested revisions to He-C 6446 were formulated by this group.

The Administrative Rule allows for waivers of the licensing requirements that are not directly related to safety items. This process has been utilized frequently when licensing relative caregivers who faced barriers to meeting the requirements. The most common waiver request is for extended time to finish or alternatives to the pre-service training. DCYF has determined that all criminal record checks, the Central Registry check and the fire and health inspections are crucial to ensuring for the safety of children and will not waive these items.

### STRENGTHS FOR STANDARDS APPLIED EQUALLY – OVERVIEW

Monthly meetings called the "Resource Round Up" are held with the Division’s Resource Workers and the Licensing Workers from the Agency Providers. Every meeting includes time set aside to discuss common licensing concerns. Annual refresher training is held for all involved with licensing to review the basics and share tips and strategies to improve practice.

The Foster Care Unit has worked closely with BOLQI over the past year to work on necessary revisions to the Foster Care Licensing Rule and all associated policies. As revised, the new documents more clearly articulate current best practice. The Administrative Rule for Licensing has been updated and was adopted by the Legislature in February of 2015.

Randomly chosen foster care licensing files have been subject to review for IV-E compliance and by a NH KPMG audit. Whether managed by the District Office or Child Placing Agency, the files have always passed. In addition, the Foster Care Unit performs site reviews with Child Placing Agencies every two years and District Offices on an annual basis.

### STRENGTHS- REQUIREMENTS FOR CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

Fingerprinting is mandatory for all families looking to be permitted or licensed. He-C 6446, the Administrative Rule for licensing foster homes is very clear as to the types of felonies committed that would prevent the issuing of a foster care license. The license of any foster parent committing a felony level offense as defined by the Rule, would be revoked without the benefit of an Order to Comply.



## STRENGTHS- DILIGENT RECRUITMENT OF FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE HOMES

New Hampshire believes that selecting the most appropriate family for a child who cannot safely return home can reduce the trauma of separation and loss for the child, can increase the probability of a successful placement and ideally, can create a lifelong connection or permanent home for the child, if needed. New Hampshire uses a diligent recruitment model for potential foster and adoptive families that reflects not only the ethnic and racial diversity of the children in DCYF care, but families that are naturally linked to the neighborhoods and communities' children are from.

While efforts are made to diligently recruit foster and adoptive parents who reflect the diversity of the children who need foster and adoptive homes, practice does not delay the selection of a family for the purpose of finding a racial or ethnic match. DCYF Staff as well as providers and caregivers participate in ongoing training to promote cultural competency. Through training and ongoing support, the Division makes efforts to ensure that resource families are culturally responsive to child(ren)'s needs regardless of whether they have different backgrounds.

The Community and Faith-Based Initiative (CFBI) grows stronger every year. This contracted non-profit managed by Bethany Christian Services has been very successful in supporting foster and adoptive families and increasing retention. As part of their recruitment efforts, CFBI staff forge connections with faith-based communities around the state and then are able to present to congregations about the increasing need for foster and adoptive families. CFBI has successfully maintained a grant to have a Wendy's Wonderful Kids recruiter amongst their staff. While the recruiter does not necessarily recruit new families, she has been an asset in matching children with suitable families for adoption. She also monitors the transition of the child into the family and supports with adoption preparation information.

The Division has expanded its use of the DHHS Website as an informational and recruitment tool. Pictures of Waiting Children in the state are available to viewers. Links to training and other resources for both foster and adoptive families are easily found.

DCYF enjoys a strong relationship with the New Hampshire Foster and Adoptive Parent Association (NHFAPA). DCYF values the hard work and commitment of the parents actively involved with this association who offer peer support to fellow families. The Division recognizes and appreciates that the best recruitment tool for new foster and adoptive families is a well-supported network of current foster or adoptive families.

After many years of requesting a centralized inquiry system, the Foster Care Unit at the State Office created a Centralized Inquiry team in 2010. The Foster Care Program has continued to expand this system for potential foster and adoptive parents. State Office Staff is responsible for the initial contacts with interested parties for all but three of the district offices. This ensures that consistent and timely information is being given to people wanting to learn and/or start the licensing process and that less interested or undecided people have a better understanding of the expectations before working with a local Resource Worker. This has taken a bit of work and pressure off of the field staff allowing them to work more closely with the children and families on their caseloads. The three offices that have chosen to work directly with a potential applicant share the contact information with Central Inquiry for data entry. Central Inquiry is now able to track when and how an inquiry is referred to the Division, whether or not they have registered for

training, whether or not they have completed training, and whether or not they have obtained a license. The data has shown that a greater percentage of applicants have followed through since their initial inquiry and have become licensed. In 2014, the Division tracked 641 inquiries. Of that number forty-one percent (almost half) responded with their information sheet or took classes, thirty percent training, twenty percent of the people completed FACES and eleven percent are licensed.

A new child specific recruitment strategy for Waiting Children in New Hampshire was kicked off in January of 2014. The Division partnered with WMUR, the statewide public television channel to create a specialized segment on NH Chronicle called “Home At Last”. Spearheaded by the Administrator for the Bureau of Community and Family Support, this show is designed to find adoptive families for those children who have been waiting too long. Since its inception, ten children have been presented on the show. Five of these children are moving towards permanency with their new families. The show has proven to be a great way to educate the public about the need for foster and adoptive parents for children in need while recruiting for the specific child. Additional families who have called in after viewing the show have been licensed to provide foster care in their home communities and some have been matched with other Waiting Children needing adoption.

In addition to the recruitment activities listed above, the Division also supports several more recruitment initiatives:

- The Heart Gallery is a project initiated by the New Mexico Department of Youth and Families as a way to recruit adoptive families for waiting children. The Division partnered with Jordan’s Furniture and the Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) in creating the permanent New Hampshire Heart Gallery in the Jordan’s Furniture store in Nashua;
- New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families has also enhanced its traveling Heart Gallery that is used for statewide recruitment and retention events. The traveling display has been featured at various locations throughout the State, including several faith communities and the Capitol Center for the Arts in Concord. A poster-sized version of the display is available to the district office staff for use at local events; and
- The Division has continued its partnership with the New Hampshire Professional Photographers Association and some individual volunteer photographers to take photos of waiting children. There are currently nineteen photographers who are volunteering their time and services for this project. A printer has agreed donate the 20x24 photos needed for the gallery. In addition, each child will receive a framed 8x10 photo.

#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT FOR STANDARDS FOR FOSTER HOMES – OVERVIEW

The Foster Care Program has seen significant changes in staff, especially in the private agencies, over the last several years and it is evident that some newer staff do not know the RSA or Administrative Rule as thoroughly as needed. Training has been offered to the revisions in the new Administrative Rule approved in February of 2015. Despite its recent adoption, the Rule will need to be opened again in the near future to further enhance language around Prudent

Parent Standards as required by H.B. 4980. The Division is exploring technical assistance to address these standards and improve the overall recruitment and retention strategies through the Child Welfare Capacity Building Center for States.

A frequent barrier to licensing faced by some applicants is the ability to pass the local Fire Inspection. The State law requires the local fire inspector to approve the foster homes in their town. Despite efforts to develop a uniform fire inspection form with the State Fire Marshall in the past, each town and city sets its own requirements based on which Fire Safety Code they have adopted and their own interpretation of a foster home. There are some towns in the State where no new foster homes have been licensed because of the inability to pass a fire inspection in an older home. Renewed efforts are needed to plan and organize a meeting with the State Fire Marshall and all local fire inspectors to promote a better understanding of the purpose of foster care and the importance of having placements available in every community.

#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT FOR STANDARDS APPLIED EQUALLY – OVERVIEW

Due to staffing turn over in both the Division and Child Placing Agencies, it has become evident at times that some newer staff are not as skilled in the assessment of new applicants in order to develop high quality home studies. Through the Adoption Preparation and Preservation Project (NHAPP) grant, all Resource and Licensing Workers will be trained and certified in the SAFE (Structured Analysis Family Evaluation) Home study process. The use of SAFE will improve consistency and quality in assessment and home studies of foster and adoptive families. It is expected that this will have a direct effect on the ability to match children with the most appropriate family to meet their needs.

#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT- REQUIREMENTS FOR CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

Prior to 2007, the field could easily and expeditiously complete a New Hampshire Criminal Record check and Central Registry check in order to permit a family who had been identified as an appropriate emergency placement for a child. With Live scan fingerprinting through the New Hampshire Department of Safety, applicants can complete this requirement quickly but turnaround time the results is often a barrier to placing a child in the preferred home as the first placement. It could be beneficial and time saving to explore the possibility of a memorandum of understanding between the Department of Safety and the Division to allow an identified Program Administrator access to the protected information databases.

#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT- DILIGENT RECRUITMENT OF FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE HOMES

Whether it is the Foster Care Unit providing information to potential applicants and tracking data or the Resource Worker in the field who is meeting with applicants to complete the required elements and develop a Home Study, time is a huge factor. As the responsibilities of the Resource Workers have expanded, there has been less time for them to dedicate to broad recruitment tactics. The larger community of New Hampshire has not been receiving clear and consistent public messaging about the need for and role of foster and adoptive families on a

statewide basis. The Division is exploring technical assistance to improve the overall recruitment and retention strategies through the Child Welfare Capacity Building Center for States.

While Foster Care Licensing information is built into the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS), most of the data for the Foster Care Program is done by hand counting and the use of Excel. The Division needs to develop more extensive data about successful families so that DCYF can recruit similar families in every community. There are technologically advanced programs, like GIS Mapping that would be ideal to help the Division learn where to focus recruitment messaging. The Division has recently started using ROM and the State Office Foster Care Staff have been trained to use the informative database. ROM is helping to better track children who are entering family settings. The Foster Care Manager is working with BOLQI Staff on a trial GIS Mapping project for existing licensed homes.

There are currently fourteen Resource Workers and approximately eight Agency Licensing Workers in the State who are responsible for assessing applicants for foster care licensing and developing the home study that is vital to matching. While guidelines and templates have been created, there is still much inconsistency throughout the State. There has been a growing need to evaluate the home study and matching process and search out or create a more evidenced-based model. The Division is excited to be partnering with the Adoption Supervisor under the Adoption Preparation and Preservation Project grant to begin the SAFE Home study process in New Hampshire.

The Foster Care Unit tracks closing data on all homes and a significant number have closed in the last five years. For all five years, more homes have closed than have been opened.

May through April	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of DCYF foster homes (April)	562	506	462	507	468
Number of child specific foster homes	45	33	58	83	134
Adoption only foster homes	40	32	22	34	52
Number of Inquiries in year	729	673	512	668	641
Initial training completed in year	309	340	373	230	219
Number of new foster homes licensed	143	136	149	122	127
Number of homes closed	265	226	207	188	179

While most of the closing summaries clearly indicate that the family has closed on a positive note because they have adopted and their home is full or they have retired, too many indicate that they have closed because of the way they have been treated by staff. Lack of communication is the most frequent negative comment followed by a feeling that the family was not told the “whole story” about the child placed in their home. Some families have closed because their desire was to foster and they felt pressured to accept being named as the pre-adoptive family for concurrent planning. Improving customer service to the Division’s resource families and providers is an area that must be addressed in the next five years. The data shows that there is a concerning shortage of appropriate foster homes in the state and the Division cannot afford to lose more.

## INTERSTATE COMPACT ON THE PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN

The Interstate Compact on Placement of Children (ICPC) Administrator is responsible for ensuring protection and services to children who are placed across state lines for foster care, adoption, parental, relative and residential placements. The Interstate Compact is a uniform law that has been enacted by all fifty states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S Virgin Islands. It establishes orderly procedures for the interstate placement of children and fixes responsibility for those involved in placing a child.

### TIMELY HOME STUDIES

The Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006 included an amendment to encourage timely home studies. A home study is considered timely if “within sixty days after the State receives from another State a request to conduct a study of a home environment for purposes of assessing the safety and suitability of placing a child in the home, the state shall, directly or by contract:

- Conduct and complete the study ; and
- Return to the other state a report on the results of the study, which shall address the extent to which placement in the home would meet the needs of the child.”

In response to this legislation DCYF revised policies and procedures to outline:

- How to effectively evaluate families who are referred by another state for an ICPC home study; and
- What is required by the CPSW for supervision of this home, if a placement is made?

DCYF created a monthly report that provides data on ICPC referrals received into New Hampshire. This report allows the ICPC Administrator to track the timeliness of these home studies.

The ICPC Administrator has expanded the role of the ICPC Administrator’s responsibilities to include greater oversight of staff compliance with the ICPC rules and regulations. The ICPC Administrator schedules regular visits to the local offices, which has allowed staff and supervisors direct access to the ICPC Administrator for consultation and guidance regarding the issues identified above that impact timeliness of completed studies.

### **Reporting period FFY 14 (10/01/13) to 9/30/14)**

299 referrals were received and reviewed by the Deputy Compact Administrator.

### **New Hampshire Receiving:**

- 233 ICPC Referrals were received from other states;
- Ninety-five remained in the state office under the ICPC Administrator (Private adoptions, residential placements); and

- 138 were referred to district offices for completion of home studies.

**Of the 138 referred to district offices:**

- Twenty-six were completed within thirty days;
- Sixty-seven were completed within thirty-one to sixty days;
- Nineteen were completed within sixty-one to seventy-five days;
- Thirteen were completed in over seventy-five days; and
- Fourteen were not completed by end of reporting period.

**New Hampshire Sending:**

- Sixty-six ICPC Referrals were sent to other states
- Seventeen remained in the state office under the ICPC Administrator (private adoptions and residential placements)
- Forty-nine were home study requests of which:
  - Eleven were completed within thirty days;
  - Three were completed within thirty-one to sixty days;
  - Zero were completed within sixty-one to seventy-five days;
  - Eleven were completed in over seventy-five days; and
  - Twenty-four were not completed within the reporting time frame.

The following circumstances continue to impact the timely completion of home studies within sixty days:

- Child was already living with the foster/relative family at the time the request was received and the caregiver delayed submission of requested paperwork for a New Hampshire Foster Care License to be issued;
- Child was already living in the pre-adoptive home in New Hampshire at the time the request for study was received, and the family did not submit paperwork at the time it was requested;
- Child was placed in a relative home at the time of the adoptive home study request and relatives needed to complete training;



- Significant information was not received at time the request for home study was received from the sending state; e. g., criminal record history of proposed caregiver, certain evaluations, information regarding the type of study needed, etc.;
- As a professional courtesy, the Division's ICPC Administrator held onto the request until the information was received thus reducing the number of days the local office had to complete the home study once it was assigned;
- DCYF requested a mental health and/or substance abuse evaluation be completed to assess parental capacity to care for the child and was awaiting the outcome and recommendations prior to approving the home study; and
- Availability of staff resources in a district office impacted assignment and timely completion of home study.

DCYF continues to take the following action in an effort to assure timely completion of home studies:

- Requests for home studies that are lacking necessary information to assign to the local office will not be assigned to the district office until the ICPC Administrator has received the missing information;
- Oversight by the DCYF Field Administrators assigned to the local offices including follow-up with the supervisor and assigned staff to address issues related to incomplete studies;
- Monthly review of data reports that track timeframes for pending home studies and communication with the district offices regarding completion dates;
- Conference calls between the ICPC Office and the district office Child Protective Services Worker and Supervisor around whether a placement may be supported.

#### ICPC PERMANENCY PLANNING

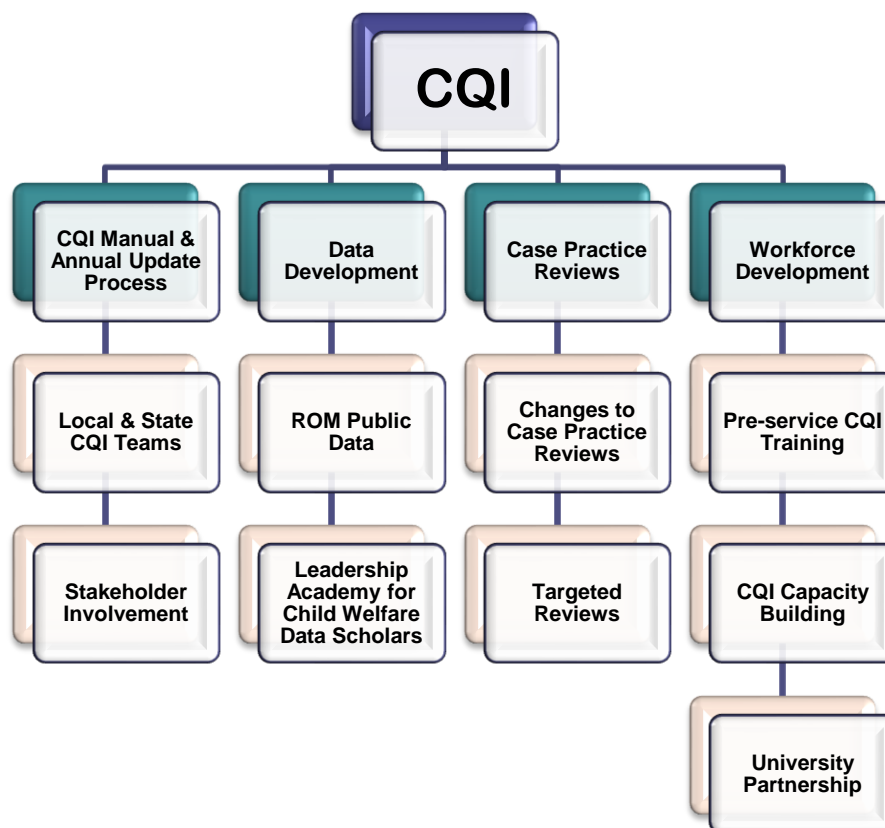
In an effort to assist in achieving timely permanency for children, the ICPC Administrator is available to attend internal Permanency Planning Team Meetings. It is often recommended to initiate the ICPC process sooner in case planning due to the amount of time it takes to receive a completed home study from another state. The ICPC Administrator also communicates with the receiving state once placement has been made to ensure that the permanency plan is achieved.

## Section 3: Plan for Improvement: Goals and Objectives

### GOAL 1: CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

During the past year, New Hampshire has continued to critically assess its Continuous Quality Improvement System, in accordance with the Children Bureau's Information Memorandum of August 2012. New Hampshire has carefully considered the five functional components of a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) system outlined in that memorandum, and continues to believe it has in place a majority of the essential components described. However, in its CFSP, New Hampshire identified several areas that require enhancement and developed strategies to address each of these objectives. As noted in the Assessment Section above, New Hampshire has taken steps in each of these main areas over the past year, and continues to emphasize work on these objectives.

The figure below provides a graphic representation of the four objectives included in this goal.



## **Objective 1: Continuous Quality Improvement Manual and Annual Update Process**

As New Hampshire embarked upon the process of assessing its Continuous Quality Improvement System in previous years, it became apparent that although there were many good Continuous Quality Improvement Practices and processes in place throughout the Division, in many instances those practices were not formalized or integrated with one another. Additionally, information from those processes was not systematically collected in one location so that it could be used as effectively as possible to guide Division decision-making. To that end, New Hampshire conceptualized a plan to create a written Continuous Quality Improvement Manual accompanied by a process of annual update that would create an infrastructure for this integration to occur.

As noted in the CFSP, a critical step in accomplishing this objective will be to create a Continuous Quality Improvement Manual that will integrate the varied Continuous Quality Improvement components currently in place and comprehensively communicate these to internal and external stakeholders. New Hampshire currently has a draft of this manual prepared, and intends to update and complete it. This was originally envisioned as the first step in this objective, however as the draft was reviewed, it became apparent that the Continuous Quality Improvement Teams and stakeholder involvement described below would need to be developed before this manual could be completed effectively.

In light of this, the Division for Children, Youth and Families has begun the process of designing a structure for identifying and addressing challenges at the local, facility, and state level, using sound Continuous Quality Improvement Principles. New Hampshire intends to accomplish this through the creation of local and state level Continuous Quality Improvement Teams. During the past year, New Hampshire has continued to utilize a model for these local Continuous Quality Improvement Teams in offices that have developed Practice Improvement Initiatives following Case Practice Reviews. These teams are made up of Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Field Staff, Supervisors and field administrators, and are facilitated by staff knowledgeable in Continuous Quality Improvement Principles (BOLQI Staff). Data from the OSRI, Solution Based Casework Fidelity Tool, stakeholder survey, and parent leader focus groups are used to identify areas for improvement, and strategies are developed using a standard model (Appreciative Inquiry). Once in place, implementation of the strategies is monitored by supervisors, field administrators and Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement Staff. Data from both the Case Practice Reviews and the Practice Improvement Initiative plans are compiled through the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement participation and included in the APSR Assessment of Performance section.

A strategy has been created to solicit input on how to effectively expand the work of these teams beyond just the “Practice Improvement Initiative period” in an office. Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement Staff will attend a series of representative workgroups during the next several months, some of which include external stakeholders, and ask a consistent set of questions such as:

- What about the Practice Improvement Initiative implementation was most helpful in your office (post-development)?

- What does your office do already, if anything, (outside of a Practice Improvement Initiative) for improvement planning?
  - How does your office identify when there's a problem that needs work?
  - How does your office figure out what to do about it?
  - How does your office know if it worked to improve the problem?
  - Have any stakeholders been involved in any way in this improvement planning? If so, who and how?
- For any stakeholders...what level of involvement do you have or would you want/be able to have in the Division for Children, Youth and Families' improvement planning?

This information will be used to design a process of Continuous Quality Improvement and annual reporting that is sustainable because it builds upon the many efforts already in place and does not impose significant new administrative work on field staff.

Additionally, New Hampshire has moved forward during this past year in engaging stakeholders specifically in Continuous Quality Improvement efforts. The Division for Children, Youth and Families has presented data regarding challenges in its protective investigation processes and solicited feedback for improvement, from cross-discipline groups including the New Hampshire Attorney's Generals Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect and the New Hampshire Children's Trust Fund Community Education and Advocacy Committee. The Division for Children, Youth and Families' Director, Lorraine Bartlett, solicited feedback for improvement from a cross-discipline group of internal and external stakeholders in a town hall forum at the Division's Annual Conference. Feedback from stakeholder surveys and parent leader focus groups have been included in district office Practice Improvement Initiatives. Reviews of Juvenile Justice Services were shared with the Statewide Advisory Group and the Governor's Commission on At-Risk Youth. Data regarding key processes and outcomes expected to be impacted by the Division for Children, Youth and Families Practice Model were presented to the Practice Model Design Team, which was comprised of a representative group of staff from across the Division, and input was solicited regarding improvement planning.

The Division has viewed these efforts as pilots and intentionally taken lessons learned from them and integrated them into plans going forward. For example, when presenting data to state level stakeholders, it has been valuable to ensure a person with current and detailed practice information is present to answer specific questions that are generated by the data. Additionally, learning about the scope and subject matter of data that a particular group may be able to comment on has been helpful. The Division intends to continue these efforts with both internal and external stakeholders at the statewide level during the next year. Specifically, there is an intention to reconvene the Practice Model Design Team twice annually to analyze outcome data as well as monitor and provide input on the Practice Model implementation. However, the Division believes that stakeholder engagement in Continuous Quality Improvement may be most valuable at the local level, and to that end as noted above, intends to seek input from field staff and stakeholders regarding what support is needed for those efforts.

## Objective 2: Data Development

New Hampshire continues to have a number of reliable data sources, including the Bridges Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System, AFCARS/NCANDS and the State Data Profile, Case Practice Reviews, CourtStream information system and Performance-based Standards at the Sununu Center, NYTD data, provider reviews, training evaluation and various surveys of staff and stakeholders. The Division for Children, Youth and Families also continues to produce a wide variety of management reports, which are used to review fundamental process measures. Administration uses this data to identify statewide trends for oversight and to inform practice discussions during monthly Leadership meetings. Supervisors use this data similarly within their offices.

A great deal of progress has been made during the past year in advancing the availability of quality data to staff and the usage of data to drive decisions. One of the primary catalysts for this progress has been the ongoing development of the Results Oriented Management (ROM) system. As noted in the Assessment section, New Hampshire, with support from Casey Family Programs, has dedicated significant resources to the development and roll-out of the ROM placement and in-home reports. This effort has led to overall enhanced Division focus on data accuracy and usage. Through the development and testing process, a number of data quality issues have been identified and addressed. Additionally, staff using ROM have a heightened appreciation for the impact of accurate data entry on data quality. In fact, a brief Data Quality training has been developed and is scheduled to be delivered at the statewide Leadership meeting in June, as part of a larger practice discussion about data usage.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families also recognizes that the availability of quality data is only helpful if it is utilized to improve practice. New Hampshire has therefore taken various steps during the past year to support and prepare field staff for using data from ROM. Prior to the initial ROM roll-out in 2014; a Data Culture Survey was administered to all field staff, which gauged staff attitudes and beliefs regarding the use of data in their work. Results indicated that on the whole, staff had positive attitudes about Division efforts to improve and the use of data toward this. The survey also identified some areas that may need attention, such as the availability and sharing of data with staff and stakeholders. These results were shared with field supervisors and administrators. This survey was re-administered this spring to evaluate the impact of the initial ROM roll-out and continue to identify strengths and challenges to data usage. These survey results are not yet analyzed, but will again be shared with supervisors at a Leadership meeting to prompt a discussion intended to move the usage of data forward.

Another effective intervention that has been developed during the past year has been the publishing of “Did You Know?” email blasts. These emails are sent out approximately twice each month to Division staff, and typically include two small pieces of data drawn from ROM, accompanied by questions about how this data point looks in their local area. More recently, some “Did You Knows” has included a highlight of a positive data point in a particular office, such as a high percentage of siblings placed together. Usage reports consistently show that ROM usage spikes following the publishing of these brief and easy to understand email blasts.

As noted above, supervisory reports are routinely reviewed at statewide Leadership meetings, and the local usage of those reports continues to evolve, most notably in Juvenile Justice Field

Services and the Sununu Youth Services Center. Supervisors in those settings are increasingly engaged in assessing the accuracy of those reports and considering how they can use them to improve practice. At the Sununu Youth Services Center specifically, Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement Staff are working with Unit Managers on a targeted intervention to improve the quality and accuracy of incident reporting based on analysis and presentation of that data. Future plans include the replacement of some supervisory reports with ROM reports and the review of those at Leadership meetings instead, which is intended to both streamline the report production and encourage supervisors to use ROM directly.

As noted in the Assessment section, the roll-out of in-home reports is anticipated during the summer of 2015, and will coincide with training for all field staff on the usage of ROM. Currently, only supervisors and administrative staff have access to the system. New Hampshire has uniquely elected to provide access and training to all field staff, based upon its belief that all staff can and should contribute to Continuous Quality Improvement. New Hampshire has requested a new development structure from Kansas University that will allow for a unique utility of the ROM system for both administrative performance monitoring as well as local and state level Continuous Quality Improvement. To this end, the in-home reports have been designed to allow cases shared between Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Services to be seen on both workers' caseloads at the field level, but unduplicated at the administrative level for combined case counts and analysis. Additionally, New Hampshire has worked with Kansas University to design a set of specific reports for Juvenile Justice Service's outcomes and Central Intake, which are anticipated to be available later in 2015. Lastly, New Hampshire has identified resources that will support the addition of the new national standards reports in ROM that will enable New Hampshire to monitor state performance against those measures on a "real-time" basis.

Additionally, a public portal to ROM has been developed for New Hampshire that will allow anyone to view aggregated outcome data with ease online. This will ensure that stakeholders of all types are able to view up-to-date data on key outcomes, which is intended to further their engagement in improvement planning as well as allow reallocation of data resources currently needed to respond to data requests. The Division for Children, Youth and Families intends to make this "public face" of ROM available following the initial roll-out of the in-home reports to the Division's staff. A plan is being developed to prepare field supervisors and staff to respond to questions that may arise when the site is initially created, and work will need to be done to develop clear descriptors of the data to ensure accurate interpretation.

Concurrent with providing greater accessibility to data, New Hampshire has recognized a need to provide additional skills and knowledge regarding the use of data to staff. New Hampshire has intentionally leveraged its partnership with the University of New Hampshire (UNH) Department of Social Work under the University Partnership grant, awarded by the National Child Welfare Workforce Initiative, to focus workforce development efforts on competency in data-driven decision-making. During the past year, three data trainings have been designed and delivered jointly by Division staff and University of New Hampshire Faculty to University Partnership interns, who will be entering the Division for Children, Youth and Families Workforce. These trainings were informed by the Division's and University of New Hampshire expertise in the use of data in Continuous Quality Improvement and by similar work being done in other states. Through this grant, curriculum will be developed over this summer, and four



half-day trainings with labs will be piloted over the next academic year. These trainings will be offered again to the UP interns and to a small number of existing Division's Staff who apply and are accepted into this program. The trainings will provide participants with basic knowledge of the use of data and its application to Continuous Quality Improvement in Child Welfare, and coaching on a small-scale Continuous Quality Improvement project in their area of practice. This series of trainings will inform the development of a larger-scale Academy for Data Leaders that will become a regular offering of the Division for Children, Youth and Families' Training Program for selected staff through the Division's Staff Training Partner, the University of New Hampshire, Center for Professional Excellence. This is expected to build capacity in data-driven decision-making and leadership development across the Division. These Data Leaders will take on leadership roles in the development and support of the local and state level Continuous Quality Improvement Teams.

### **Objective 3: Case Practice Reviews**

New Hampshire maintains a strong and well-established Case Practice Review (CPR) process, as described in the Assessment Section, and this process will remain in place. New Hampshire will use the revised version of the federal OSRI tool beginning in 2016, and make any other adaptations to its process to continue to mirror the federal traditional CFSR process. New Hampshire also continues to use the Solution Based Casework Fidelity tool in all reviews, to support and monitor implementation of this key Practice Model strategy. New Hampshire also continues participation in Performance-based Standards at the Sununu Center.

During the past year, New Hampshire has engaged in a learning process in preparation for its CFSR in 2018, as referenced in the Assessment Section of this report. This process has included a clarification of the application of the OSRI to Juvenile Justice cases specifically, as well as increased understanding of the nuances of the new tool as they impact quality assurance during the reviews. New Hampshire would still like to gather additional data during Case Practice Reviews regarding a Juvenile Justice specific measure of community safety, but has elected to focus during this past year on the changes needed to prepare for its CFSR.

In its CFSP, New Hampshire identified a challenge in its capacity to conduct ad hoc or targeted file reviews outside of the Case Practice Review process. While this remains an issue on a large scale, New Hampshire has been able to conduct various types of reviews in addition to Case Practice Reviews over the past year as needed. For example, a file review of the Division for Children, Youth and Families notification of law enforcement in reports of sexual or severe physical abuse is occurring in one office currently, and is planned to occur statewide within the next several months. A review of specific incident reports at the Sununu Youth Services Center was conducted to further analyze the causes of a spike in incidents last fall.

## **Objective 4: Continuous Quality Improvement Training**

The Division is currently engaging in a number of workforce development activities focused on Continuous Quality Improvement skills and knowledge that will be critical pre-requisites for the achievement of these objectives. Given this, New Hampshire has developed a multi-pronged approach to developing and sustaining Continuous Quality Improvement knowledge at graduated levels for staff in all areas of the Division.

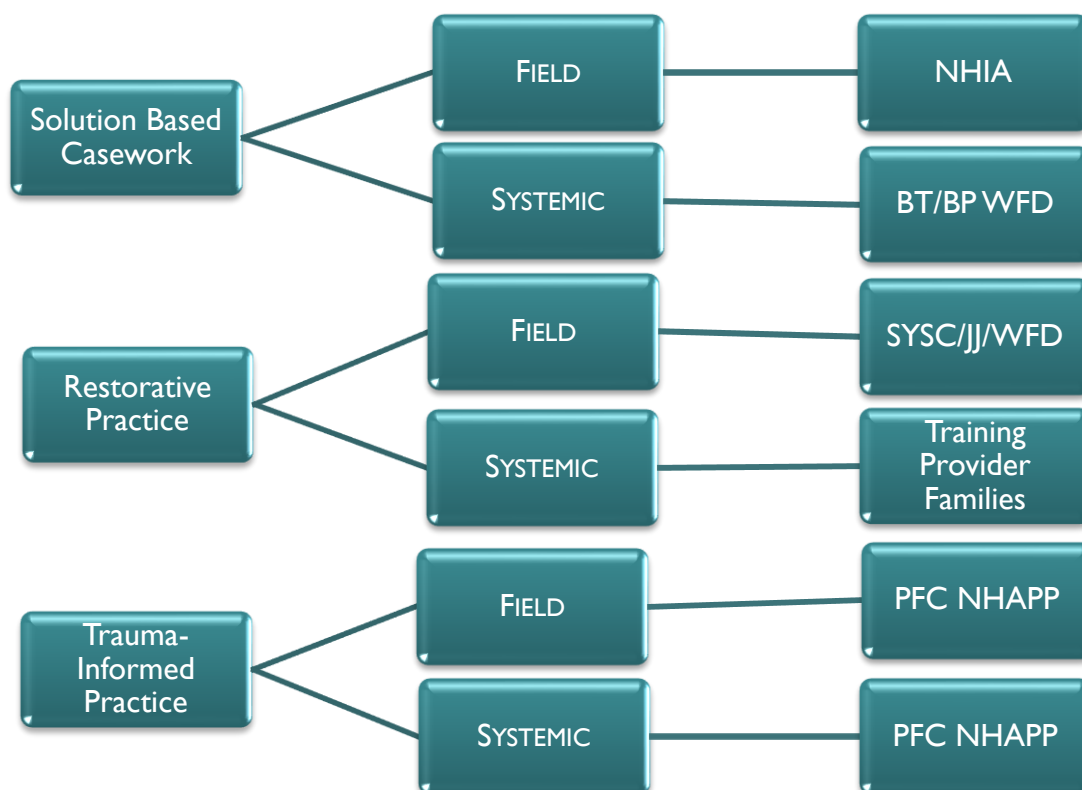
Currently, all new staff attend an Orientation in which they are briefly introduced to the concept of a learning organization and their role in Continuous Quality Improvement. New Hampshire still intends to develop a broader Continuous Quality Improvement Pre-service Training for all Division Staff that will provide an overview of key Continuous Quality Improvement Concepts, and may consider one of the Continuous Quality Improvement Academy modules as a model for content and delivery format. This possibility was piloted recently with Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement Staff, who participated in the first two modules of the Continuous Quality Improvement Academy as a large group and engaged in a follow-up discussion about its application to current Division Continuous Quality Improvement efforts. Although some challenges with the delivery format were noted, New Hampshire believes there is potential to utilize the modules coupled with a “live” facilitator.

New Hampshire also intends to continue work that has already begun to build capacity within its existing workforce. Five staff from the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement completed the Continuous Quality Improvement Academy, sponsored by the Children’s Bureau, during the past year, which has served to formalize and enhance the existing knowledge of these key Continuous Quality Improvement Staff. Staff have begun to directly apply the learning from this Academy in a number of areas. For example, in approaching the concerns regarding the Division’s Investigation Process referenced earlier, Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement Staff have led the initial exploration of root causes through data analysis. Additionally, learning from the Continuous Quality Improvement Academy has informed the development of a logic model for the Practice Model in order to redesign a comprehensive evaluation plan. Portions of the Academy have been shared individually with new Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement Staff as they have joined the team, and it continues to be used in Continuous Quality Improvement Training efforts at various levels.

Also, as mentioned above, the University of New Hampshire was awarded a University Partnership grant from the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute in 2014, which will be in place for the duration of this CFSP period. Data-driven decision-making was identified as a workforce development priority focus for the grant. As a result, the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement has and will continue to serve as an internship site for at least one intern each year, which will provide experience in Continuous Quality Improvement Processes which those staff will carry into their future roles within the Division. Additionally, the availability of the grant has sparked increased interest in pursuing advanced graduate degrees in existing Division for Children, Youth and Families Staff, which will serve to increase the educational level of the workforce overall, but also, provide specific exposure of those staff to evaluation and Continuous Quality Improvement Concepts. Lastly, the Division for Children, Youth and Families continues to participate with the University of New Hampshire in the

required Leadership Academy for Deans and Directors (LADD) through the grant, and focus on the development of the Data Leaders Academy in Objective Two above as the project for that work. In this way, the Division will be able to leverage not only the resources and experience of the University of New Hampshire in developing and implementing this program, but also the supports and coaching of the LADD process in this effort.

## GOAL 2: PRACTICE MODEL MASTERY



In 2009, the New Hampshire's Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) began the implementation of a Practice Model to establish a shared vision and consistency in policy and practice. The design of the Practice Model began with developing the organization's Beliefs and Guiding Principles and determining which practice strategies would be implemented to support those values in practice. Several months into this process the Division, which consisted of Child Protective Services (CPS) and a number of supporting bureaus, underwent a merge that added two areas of practice-Juvenile Justice Services (JJS) and the Sununu Youth Services Center (SYSC), New Hampshire's state run secure youth facility. As a result of the merge, three separate design teams were created to establish Practice Models for each of these areas of practice.

Between 2010 and 2013 the design teams worked to develop Beliefs and Guiding Principles that were consistent with their specific areas of practice. Additionally, several practice initiatives were chosen by each design team to help move practice forward in a direction that was supportive of the Practice Model. Ultimately, many of these strategies were linked to the

Division's Program Improvement Plan (PIP) that was developed pursuant to the federal Child and Family Services Review. The sustained attention that was able to be given to these strategies assisted the Division in its successful completion of the PIP.

In 2014, the Division for Children, Youth and Families began examining ways to solidify the Division following the merge. A new design team was created that included members from each of the previous design teams and represented all areas within the Division. This team, in partnership with the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, developed a set of unified beliefs that truly represents the Division for Children, Youth and Families in its entirety. Over the course of six months, the design team met monthly to build consensus on its beliefs and direction in terms of practice strategies.

The Division created seven belief statements that address critical areas such as safety, permanency, well-being, prevention, respect, strengths and families. Each area of field practice has retained its own unique set of Guiding Principles for the seven unified beliefs. Additionally, the Practice Model continues to be based on four research-based theories which are Solution Focused Theory, Family Development Theory, Restorative Justice Theory and Parallel Process Theory.

Although many practice strategies have been implemented as a result of the Practice Model, the Division has identified three key foundational strategies on which efforts will focus over the next several years. These strategies include Solution Based Casework, Trauma-Informed Practice and Restorative Practices. The Division for Children, Youth and Families' Child and Family Services Plan supports this focus and will help the Division provide sustained attention to ensure that the mastery of these strategies is achieved. To assist in guiding these processes, steering committees have been developed for each of these foundational strategies to ensure that the most effective implementation approaches are utilized.

In 2015, the Division for Children, Youth and Families intends to communicate the Practice Model's key components with internal and external stakeholders. A communication team has been meeting monthly and has developed a strategic communication plan that details the audiences, methods and venues for presentations. This plan will be rolled out in phases, beginning with internal stakeholders such as employees, and ending with town hall style meetings in the community that are designed to target external stakeholders, community partners and the general public.

The year 2015 will prove to be full of transition for the Division for Children, Youth and Families' Practice Model. The Division will transition from building and implementing the Practice Model to its sustainability and mastery. Focusing on the mastery of the key foundational strategies will help to enhance safety, permanency and well-being across all areas of practice. Continuous Quality Improvement and ongoing evaluation will help to keep the focus on improving outcomes for children, youth and families in New Hampshire.

## Objective 1: Solution Based Casework

### BACKGROUND

Following the development of New Hampshire's Practice Model the decision was made to rebuild the Division's organizational foundation on Solution Based Casework (SBC). This decision required significant training and support to assure fidelity to the model was maintained as it was assimilated into practice statewide. Full implementation of Solution Based Casework Practice was accomplished in five phases, each with advancing expectations in worker and supervisor knowledge, application and skill development. The Child Protective Services and Juvenile Justice Services Field Administrators led oversight of the Solution Based Casework implementation process, including guiding district office implementation plans and working with the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement to monitor Solution Based Casework success. Solution Based Casework coaches are identified as field administrators, all district office supervisors, certain assistant supervisors, designated Child Protective Service Workers and Juvenile Probation and Parole Officer IVs, program specialists, and Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement staff. These individuals are key managers of this process and remain the drivers of success in the transfer of learning process.

Over the past year, New Hampshire has focused on the implementation of training and coaching plan intended to enhance and sharpen staff skills and confidence in the application of Solution Based Casework to a level of mastery, and enhance organizational and supervisory capacity to ensure sustainability of these skills. A group of twelve coaches were strategically selected to ensure ability to impact the overall Division for Children, Youth and Families System in each of these critical implementation areas:

- Statewide training by Dr. Dana Christiansen, developer of Solution Based Casework, was held during the week of January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015. All Child Protective Services and Juvenile Justice Services Field Staff attended a half-day refresher training, field supervisors attended a full day "Supervising to Solution Based Casework" training, and twelve coaches attended all five days, as well as coaches debrief and planning meetings throughout the week;
- Coaches completed on-site meetings with all Child Protective Services and Juvenile Justice Services Supervisors within a month following this training, in order to solidify and clarify the application to daily work and continue to assess implementation needs;
- Coaches have continued to meet at least monthly to organize planning and implementation of efforts to align system components with Solution Based Casework to further support the integration of Solution Based Casework into everyday practice. As an example, this has included the redesign of various casework forms and development of resource materials during the past year;
- Coaches have continued to receive consultation and feedback through monthly coaching calls with Dr. Christiansen, to further develop their skills, ensure consistency in their messaging to staff, and obtain consultation regarding implementation;

- At a statewide Leadership meeting on March 24, 2015, coaches delivered training on “Action Planning” with families and youth to all field supervisors, which was then replicated in each district office by supervisors supported by coaches. Through this training/coaching model, coaches have supported the strengthening of supervisor’s skills, provided consistency and clarification in training to all field staff, and received feedback directly from staff about where additional training and coaching needs exist. Coaches have also developed and delivered an additional training using this same model to supervisors on May 26<sup>th</sup>, again utilizing a statewide Leadership meeting where all supervisors are involved in ongoing practice discussions;
- Coaches have identified and begun making revisions to several pre-service trainings to add clarification and reinforce this new learning. Coaches are also actively involved as trainers for these trainings;
- Training regarding Solution Based Casework was also developed by coaches for delivery at the Division for Children, Youth and Families Annual Conference in April 2015 for both Division for Children, Youth and Families Staff and external stakeholders; and
- New Hampshire has continued to utilize the Solution Based Casework Fidelity Tool on a case sample from each district office during quarterly Case Practice Reviews. Twenty-four cases were reviewed in the Manchester District Office in March 2015. Solution Based Casework Coaches provide quality assurance, compile, analyze and present results, and facilitate the development of resulting improvement plans.

New worker training now includes the concepts and principles of Solution Based Casework in the core modules they are required to attend. In addition the Solution Based Casework Sustainability Plan clearly articulates timeframes for certification of new staff as well as ongoing monitoring and review of case consultations, field observations and Solution Based Family Meetings to assure there is fidelity to the model. These activities include oversight by District Office Supervisors and field administrators. In addition the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement has incorporated a *Solution Based Casework Fidelity Tool* as part of ongoing Case Practice Reviews.

To assure Solution Based Casework was fully integrated into Division for Children, Youth and Families Practice as it relates to assessment of protective reports action was taken in the fall of 2011 to begin integrating Solution Based Casework with Structured Decision-Making (SDM). A new model, New Hampshire’s Integrated Assessment (NHIA) Model was designed in 2012 by a representative group of Division Child Protective Services staff with a lead staff person from the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement, in consultation with the developers of Solution Based Casework and Structured Decision-Making. This new model is also informed by Andrew Turnell's *Signs of Safety* model. Business requirements were completed for integrating the new model into the Bridges Information System and this occurred in May 2013. All Child Protective Staff and Supervisors have been trained and began using this new model of engaging families. Although this model is very comprehensive, it has been found to require more time to complete in every assessment. Due to this additional time and other factors, the assessment workflow is currently being reviewed by an assessment workgroup. New



Hampshire has also requested assistance from the new Capacity Building Center to examine assessment business practices.

At the same time that New Hampshire Integrated Assessment was being developed, the family services committee under the direction of the Southern District Office Supervisor spearheaded extensive revisions to the case plan. The new case plan format has been designed to include prompting questions for staff to assure that the concepts and principles of Solution Based Casework are applied when working with families to develop the case plan. The case plan format and instructions have been finalized and staff have been using this case planning model with families. Integration of the new case plan model into the Bridges Information System had been planned for 2013 but did not occur until 2014 due to other competing priorities for the Department of Information Technology.

Finally, to assure Solution Based Casework is fully integrated into practice the Division for Children, Youth and Families continues to revise internal policies to include language specific to Solution Based Casework. Language related to adherence to the Division's Practice Model and the use of Solution Based Casework has also been incorporated into staff' supplemental job descriptions.

#### CURRENT STATUS OF SOLUTION BASED CASEWORK

Currently, Solution Based Casework would be classified as an "Evolving Practice" in New Hampshire. As indicated previously it has been fully assimilated into the Division for Children, Youth and Families' day-to-day practice, but the successful utilization of Solution Based Casework is still somewhat inconsistent across the state. However, due to ongoing training and practice at monthly Leadership meetings and by replicating those activities in the district offices, with the support of coaches, Solution Based Casework has evolved into an integral focus of DCYF's work with families and youth. Staff have grown in confidence in their ability to apply the model to a variety of case scenarios resulting in a strength-based approach to case planning. What has become evident is that ongoing education and communication with community stakeholders is important to dispel any perception that the utilization of Solution Based Casework means that there is less emphasis on accountability or safety but rather the focus is on engaging the parent or youth in case planning.

The use of the Solution Based Casework Fidelity Tool in Case Practice Reviews over the past year has shown that Solution Based Casework is not utilized with true fidelity to the model on a statewide level. What has been found is that evidence of Solution Based Casework practice is found in almost all cases, but the degree of fidelity of its use varies. It was clear amongst supervisors and administrators that there are different tools utilized in the district offices to measure the caseworkers' ability to practice Solution Based Casework during Solution Based Casework Case Observations conducted as part of the Solution Based Casework Sustainability Plan, and that the tools used do not align with the Solution Based Casework Fidelity Tool. Also, supervisors doing the observations have different skill levels. Consequently, the supervisory reviews and case observations conducted by supervisors may not align with results obtained when the Solution Based Casework Fidelity Tool is used on the same case. Therefore, before Solution Based Casework Practice statewide shows true fidelity to the model, the training of supervisors and staff must continue and the quality assurance at the district office level must be

improved and made more consistent. Once there is demonstration that Solution Based Casework is practiced with fidelity, the Division will need to maintain that level of practice and assess if it is leading to the anticipated outcomes, which come from strong family engagement and clarity in case planning. Clearly, the sustained focus on improving the utility of Solution Based Casework on a more consistent basis is essential in having the practice take hold. The combined effort of coaches and supervisors has assisted to a large degree to ensure that Solution Based Casework is an essential focus of practice.

#### FIVE YEAR VISION FOR SOLUTION BASED CASEWORK

Supervisors at all levels of Child Protective and Juvenile Justice Services must also be at the same level of mastery with Solution Based Casework. While it is a step in the right direction to have symmetry with the quality assurance tools the individuals utilizing those tools must also demonstrate the same level of competency with Solution Based Casework. There has been a substantial amount of work done to integrate Solution Based Casework into the initial training of all staff and subsequent new worker training; however there is not a formal certification process for new supervisors and field administrators. This creates an imbalance in the local quality assurance as the administrators and supervisors must be truly viewed as the experts in order to ensure that caseworkers are improving their usage of Solution Based Casework.

To help facilitate these necessary changes over the next five years key changes need to occur. There needs to be improved sustainability of the certification process. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring the certification of their workers, however there needs to be a more formalized process for ensuring the certification of all supervisors, especially newer ones. There also must be less discrepancy between the Solution Based Casework Fidelity Tool and the sustainability tools used at the district office level. To support learning amongst the supervisors there has been an increased focus on the implementation of Solution Based Casework at the Division's Leadership meetings. These meetings provide invaluable opportunities for supervisors to share practices and strategies used in their respective offices. This also facilitates communication between supervisors and field administrators to address problem areas and support consistency in practice statewide. Further enhancement and review of how workers utilized the case plan is also necessary. There was discussion between the supervisors on how some staff utilize the case plan effectively, while others do not. To further support communication, ensure proper implementation and monitor the quality assurance process a statewide Solution Based Casework workgroup has been established. This group has been meeting since October of 2014. This provides one decision-making body for the implementation of Solution Based Casework at a statewide level. This workgroup consists of Solution Based Casework leaders at the caseworker level, supervisors, field administrators, quality assurance staff, and may include community stakeholders and other individuals as deemed necessary. This group has the ability to review policy, training, implementation, adherence to goals discussed in this plan and make decisions on changes that need to be made in order to improve the implementation of Solution Based Casework statewide. This group has also served as the liaison between the Division's district offices and the state office.

In order to successfully achieve these outcomes, the Division for Children, Youth and Families must engage its stakeholders. The implementation of Solution Based Casework as the Division for Children, Youth and Families' Practice will only be as effective as the Division's ability to

bring the courts, parent partners, youth consultants and service providers to the table. These critical entities must fully understand the changes being made, the direction the Division is moving in and involved in partnering with the Division in the process of mastering Solution Based Casework.

### STRATEGIES FOR SOLUTION BASED CASEWORK MASTERY

Below is the Division's first year progress report in its work towards statewide mastery of Solution Based Casework:

**Strategy 1:** Streamline quality assurance process at statewide and district office level.

***Update (Year One):*** There have been a number of developments regarding quality assurance including New Hampshire Integrated Assessment Training and New Hampshire Integrated Assessment Case Reads formalizing practice discussions so each region/individual is hearing the same information. These case reads have occurred in the monthly New Hampshire Integrated Assessment Workgroup meetings and at a statewide Leadership meeting on February of 2015.

Twelve coaches were identified in order to attain a level of expertise to assist with all aspects of integrating Solution Based Casework in the field, training, policy, and Quality Assurance Fidelity Reads. Coaches facilitated training at the March Leadership meeting for supervisors and then coached supervisors to provide the same training in their district offices. This occurred from March through the month of May.

**Strategy 2:** Align the Solution Based Casework Sustainability Plan with the Division's quality assurance process to ensure sustainability and growth, not just compliance.

***Update (Year One):*** This piece is being managed through the identification of coaches to become more skilled and knowledgeable about Solution Based Casework in order to learn, coach, train, monitor, inform and mentor staff on the model. The Division has found that the hands on approach with staff having opportunities to practice action planning and the development of individual and family level objectives have been most productive.

Each district office is collecting the same data regarding field supervision/observations, file reviews and staff's participation in quarterly case consults.

Additionally, evidence of Solution Based Casework is sought in regional Practice Improvement Initiative development following Case Practice Review to ensure sustained attention to developing skills and the integration of Solution Based Casework.

**Strategy 3:** Fully integrate Solution Based Casework into the Division for Children, Youth and Families' policy, training and Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System.

**Update (Year One):** Through the development and utilization of field coaches the Division is creating a team who can teach, mentor, coach, review and model the integration of Solution Based Casework. Included on this coaching team are trainers, curriculum writers and training staff, Quality Assurance individuals both regarding training and practice and field practice quality reviewers. The New Hampshire Integrated Assessment screens have been fully incorporated into the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System and are being utilized statewide.

**Strategy 4:** Create greater field capacity within all levels (caseworker, supervisor and administrator).

**Update (Year One):** A key task in this strategy has been the identification, development and utilization of the field coaches to support practice discussions regarding the integration of Solution Based Casework as well as the presence of these coaches in Leadership discussions, field staffing and amidst policy review and development, training development and delivery, and Case Practice Reviews.

The field coaches have held two formalized regional discussions since the Solution Based Casework Booster Training that was held in January 2015. The first discussion was to obtain feedback from staff as to how Solution Based Casework has been integrated to this point and obtain input from staff regarding areas that might need attention. The coaches identified six questions.

1. What did you hear or did staff hear that we are doing right?
2. What is your sense of the temperature of your office as it relates to Solution Based Casework?
3. Let's use Action Plans ("Get words on paper")
4. Your thoughts on FLO/ILO's and the quality of them in your office
5. Questions from the training
6. Your office's use of the four supervision questions
  - What child maltreatment actually happened?
  - So what is the new plan to keep children safe?
  - Are we working the plan?
  - How are we measuring plan progress?

The second practice discussion on Action Plans was presented first at the February Leadership Meeting with all field supervisors and replicated in the regional offices beginning March, 2015 through May, 2015. Solution Based Casework Action Plan training was held at the statewide Leadership training on May 26, 2015 as the coaches determined that more practice sessions involving additional case scenarios were needed.

For these practice discussions formal discussions occurred regarding action planning in each of the four milestones and staff were divided into groups and given scenarios in which they were invited to create action plans and identify what milestone the action plan depicted and what could be added to move it to the next milestone.

**Strategy 5:** Consistency in using Solution Based Casework in case plans, action plans, case consults, field supervisions and documenting adherence to core Solution Based Casework Principles.

**Update (Year One):** This strategy involves the identification of the twelve Solution Based Casework Coaches including the Administrator for the Bureaus of Child Protection and Juvenile Justice, six field administrators, two trainers, one training liaison, three members of the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement, development of these coaches and the implementation of leadership and regional practice discussions and coaching sessions to ensure consistency of expectations, training and skill development.

**Strategy 6:** Increased parent partner, youth and community involvement in moving Solution Based Casework forward statewide.

**Update (Year One):** A break out session for the 2015 Division for Children, Youth and Families Conference exposed community members to Solution Based Casework and what to expect from staff. The Division for Children, Youth and Families will identify opportunities to obtain input from birth parents, youth and other members of the Better Together Team. In the Better Together Workshops, which happen at regular intervals throughout the year, there is a module called “What partnership looks like” where Solution Based Casework is presented and discussed with parent partners, staff and community partners. Additionally, the Better Together with Birth Parents steering committee discussed the Child and Family Services Plan in order to align the work that the committee is doing with Solution Based Casework, restorative practices and the trauma work. Parent Partners are also providing a panel discussion in the local offices to discuss safety planning and other topics related to the application of Solution Based Casework. There is a tracking mechanism for these events and what the outcome is related to practice improvements related to these discussions.

**Strategy 7:** Ensuring that training focuses on the Division's Staff mastering the basic concepts of Solution Based Casework and can effectively use them in practice.

**Update (Year One):** Representatives from the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement and the training unit are present for workgroup meetings as well as having individuals from these areas identified as field coaches and trainers of Solution Based Casework. Discussions regarding training as well as practice discussions and field coaching sessions will ensure the focus of Division Staff mastering the concepts of Solution Based Casework. The Solution Based Casework Fidelity Review Process incorporated in the Case Practice Review also provides a review and the subsequent Practice Improvement Initiative offers opportunities for attention and oversight.

**Strategy 8:** Establish a Solution Based Casework Statewide Workgroup that reviews and creates policy, assesses implementation, addresses training needs and supports consistency in practice statewide.

**Update (Year One):** An Solution Based Casework Statewide Workgroup has been created and meets one time each month to discuss the integration of Solution Based Casework into field practice. Participants include members of the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement, training, the coaches, and field representatives to ensure all aspects are covered. These individuals also participate in monthly coaching calls with Dana Christiansen, the founder of this model. Dana has actually reviewed action plans and provided specific feedback.

**Strategy 9:** Utilize Division for Children, Youth and Families Leadership meetings as a frequent forum to discuss Solution Based Casework implementation, share practices and successful strategies and troubleshoot areas of inconsistency in order to improve practice.

**Update (Year One):** Upon identification and development of the field coaching team these individuals have been prioritizing and creating practice discussions to be held initially during Leadership for all supervisors and to be presented in the regional offices by the coaches. Two of such meetings were held and the plan is to continue with a practice discussion at Leadership through 2015. The coaches group will work with the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement and the statewide workgroup to identify priorities and sustain the feedback loop.

While the strategies, or at least elements of them, may change over the coming years, the Division believes that sustained attention to the successful achievement of these strategies will bring the Division for Children, Youth and Families much closer to its goal of Solution Based Casework mastery across the state.



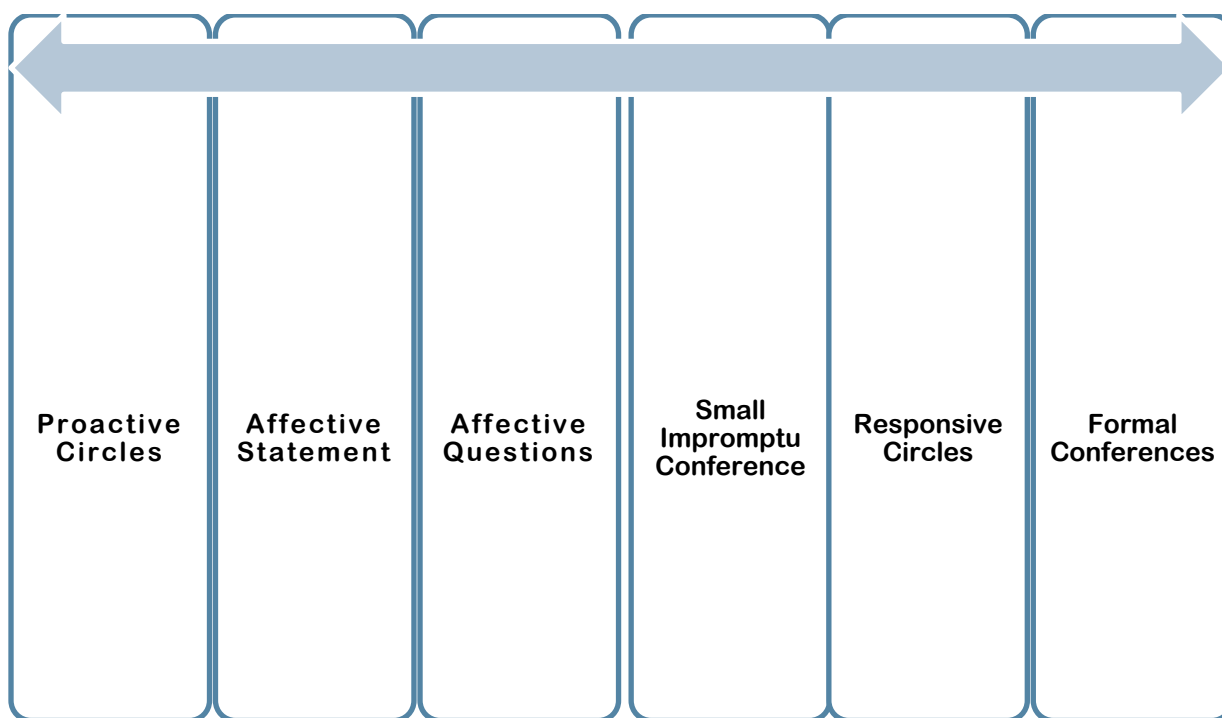
## Objective 2: Restorative Practices

### BACKGROUND

The International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) distinguishes between the terms restorative practices and restorative justice. Restorative justice practices are viewed as a subset of restorative practices. Restorative justice practices are reactive, consisting of formal or informal responses to crime and other wrongdoing after it occurs. Restorative Practices describe various strategies designed to build and restore communities. In its most formal sense, Restorative Justice is a victim-centered approach to addressing wrongdoing with a focus on repairing the harm that was caused by an offender. Restorative Practices also include the use of informal and formal processes that precede wrongdoing. These processes proactively build relationships and a sense of community to prevent conflict in the first place.

In 2011 Sununu Youth Services Center began the development of a Practice Model and chose Restorative Practices as its foundation. Restorative Justice Theory supports the engagement of affected parties (victims, wrongdoers, communities, families, and staff). Restorative Justice Practices range from formal conferences to informal interactions. Restorative Justice Practices will not take the place of consequences or treatment at Sununu Youth Services Center.

### Restorative Practices Continuum



## FIVE YEAR VISION FOR RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

The group of staff who met in May 2014 to discuss the current status and future vision of Restorative Practices (RP) were identified as the core group to provide oversight and monitoring on the Division's progress towards achieving its goals with RP.

Restorative Practice is in a unique position as it is the only objective in the Practice Model Mastery goal that has formal involvement within all three Division Field Bureaus (Child Protection, Juvenile Justice and Sununu Youth Services Center). This makes the need for a careful, planned, inclusive development that much greater.

This Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) has provided the opportunity for the staff at the Sununu Youth Services Center (SYSC) to become the center of Restorative Practices, both within Sununu Youth Services Center and in the field. Staff at Sununu Youth Services Center will be certified in both levels (formal and informal) of Restorative Practice. Once Sununu Youth Services Center has developed a group of highly trained, certified individuals in Restorative Practices, they will be the leaders responsible for training Restorative Practice champions and leaders in the field. This will allow Restorative Practice to be integrated into all three bureaus of field practice.

As the group of certified and training individuals grows, the Division will focus on developing a Restorative Practices Advisory Board that will oversee Restorative Practice on a statewide level. This will be a formalized board with a clear mission and representation from all leadership levels of the Division and community stakeholders that will be responsible for ensuring that Restorative Practices are effectively spread statewide. Considering the several implications that RP have within Child Protection and Juvenile Justice there is a real opportunity for the Division to partner with the courts, public defenders and other service providers as they will all play a significant role in the success of Restorative Practices.

## CURRENT STATUS OF RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

Over the past year Restorative Practices have continued to be implemented throughout the Division. Connections have been made between Restorative Practices and other important areas of practice, making the implementation even more relevant to the work that is already being done. A leadership team was developed that has been meeting monthly to help provide oversight to the project and to become the internal trainers and facilitators of Restorative Practices. To date the Division has trained approximately eighty internal employees in Proactive Restorative Practices. The individuals who have been trained are composed primarily of unit staff from the Sununu Youth Services Center (SYSC), the Division for Children, Youth and Families' Secure Residential Facility.

Two levels of certification were developed for Restorative Practices. Level 1 consists of proactive strategies such as Proactive Circles and Affective Language. Level 2 consists of responsive strategies which are intended to repair harm when conflict occurs. The certification has been offered to every staff member in Sununu Youth Services Center and approximately twenty staff members have achieved Level 1 certification. Over the course of the next year, the goal is to certify every staff member at Sununu Youth Services Center in Level 1 Restorative Practices.

In addition to training internal staff, a number of clinical and residential staff from provider agencies were also trained in Proactive Restorative Practices. Approximately thirty staff from two separate agencies were trained with the understanding that they will implement proactive Restorative Practice strategies in their facilities. Once those strategies have been in place for a minimum of six months, the Division will offer to train the agencies in responsive Restorative Practices so that they may internally hold circles designed to address wrongdoing and repair harm between victims and offenders.

A number of informational trainings were also provided to increase people's awareness and understanding of the Division's plans related to Restorative Practices. Internally, a number of short trainings were held with groups such as Bureau Administrators, Child Protective Services Supervisors, Juvenile Justice Supervisors and Sununu Youth Services Center Teachers. Externally, presentations were given at the Juvenile Court Diversion Network, University of New Hampshire's Professional Development and Training Conference and the Division for Children, Youth and Families' Annual Conference. New Hampshire's Juvenile Parole Board will be addressed in June 2015.

From a practice standpoint, approximately 600 Proactive Circles have taken place at Sununu Youth Services Center since the practice was implemented almost two years ago. These circles will continue to be facilitated weekly on each unit at Sununu Youth Services Center. A focus group was held on one of the units following six weeks of proactive circles and an increased sense of community was reported by staff and residents alike. Similar research was conducted by the International Institute for Restorative Practices that not only linked proactive circles to an increased sense of community, but also linked them to a decrease in aggressive behavior.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families has held eight Restorative Circles to date in an effort to address wrongdoing. Six addressed incidents that occurred in Sununu Youth Services Center and two addressed incidents that took place in the community. In all cases, wrongdoers, offense victims, supporters and interested parties convened to discuss the impact of the incident(s) and begin the process of repairing the harm caused. In many cases, follow-up surveys indicated that these experiences have been very positive.

Over the next year, the focus will continue to be training and capacity building. The Division for Children, Youth and Families intends to train more people to facilitate Responsive Circles; ideally one staff member from every area of practice. That will include one Child Protective Services Worker and one Juvenile Probation and Parole Officer from each district office, one Sununu Youth Services Center Teacher and one Sununu Youth Services Center Youth Counselor from every unit. Furthermore, all new Sununu Youth Services Center Staff Members and Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers will be trained in Proactive Restorative Practices as part of the academy. This ongoing training will ensure that Proactive Circles will continue on all units at Sununu Youth Services Center and Responsive Circles will continue to address wrongdoing within the facility.

## STRATEGIES FOR RESTORATIVE PRACTICE MASTERY

Below is an update on the strategies that are guiding the Division in its work towards statewide mastery of Restorative Practices and their anticipated timeframes for completion:

### July 2014-June 2015

- Strategy:** Develop a Restorative Practices Leadership Team to meet monthly to 1) guide restorative practices implementation; 2) train restorative practices and 3) facilitate responsive restorative circles as needed.
- Strategy:** Train all Sununu Youth Services Center Staff in Level 1 Restorative Practices by:
- 1) offering the training to every new staff at the Academy and
  - 2) offering the training to every staff member in the facility.
- Strategy:** Offer an overview of restorative practices to stakeholders by providing a workshop at the Division for Children, Youth and Families Conference.

### July 2015-June 2016

- Strategy:** Achieve Level 1 certification for all Sununu Youth Services Center Staff and Level 2 certification for at least one staff member on each unit.
- Strategy:** Train Sununu Youth Services Center Teachers in Level 2 Restorative Practices and certify select teaching staff.
- Strategy:** Consistency in using Restorative Practice language in Division documentation by revising victim letters, restitution letters, Solution Based Family Meeting forms and Sununu Youth Services Center Forms.
- Strategy:** Explore the opportunity to create a victim survey that focuses on two areas. First, has the harmed been repaired? Second, did you get what you needed out of the entire process? This will help assess the effectiveness of the RP process.

### July 2016-June 2017

- Strategy:** Achieve Level 2 certification for at least one member of each Child Protective Services and Juvenile Justice Services Office. Train and certify select Child Protective Services and Juvenile Justice Services Staff in the second level (formal conferences).
- Strategy:** Fully integrate Restorative Practices into the Division for Children, Youth and Families' policy, training and Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System.
- Strategy:** Provide ongoing Restorative Practices training for the Division's community partners and providers to assist them in doing more productive work with the victim.

### **July 2017-June 2018**

**Strategy:** Utilize the Division for Children, Youth and Families and Sununu Youth Services Center Leadership meetings as a frequent forum to discuss Restorative Practices implementation, share practices and successful strategies and troubleshoot areas of inconsistency in order to improve practice.

**Strategy:** Provide opportunities for Restorative Conferences for all youth in Sununu Youth Services Center prior to their reintegration into the community.

### **July 2018-June 2019**

**Strategy:** Create greater field capacity within all levels (worker, supervisor and administrator).

**Strategy:** Ensuring that training focuses on the Division's Staff mastering the basic concepts of RP and can effectively use them in practice. This includes focusing on how the workers can do more preparation in their work with the victim and better assess the needs of the victim in addition to the needs of the perpetrator.

While the strategies, or at least elements of them, may continue to evolve over the coming years, the Division believes that sustained attention to the successful achievement of these strategies will bring the Division for Children, Youth and Families much closer to its goal of Restorative Practices mastery across the state.

## **Objective 3: Trauma-Informed Practice**

### **BACKGROUND**

The placement stability and well-being of children is of paramount importance in Child Welfare. Many studies have been done that have measured the impact of childhood trauma on not only child stability and well-being but also on the well-being throughout the life span. The largest investigations ever conducted to assess associations between childhood maltreatment and later-life health and well-being is the Adverse Childhood Experience Study (ACES). This study found that early traumatic exposure negatively impacts individuals during childhood but continues into adulthood in areas of mental and behavioral health as well as physical health indicators such as incidents of diabetes, hypertension and even cancer. There are effective interventions, Evidence-based Practices which can be used to treat individuals that have been impacted by trauma and mitigate that impact thus preventing more costly interventions at a later time and helping each individual to realize their full potential as a contributor in their community.

The first step in the process of addressing child trauma is to help all child serving systems to have an understanding of Trauma and its impact. This is referred to as looking at issues using a "trauma lens". Child serving systems include all Child Welfare Staff, foster parents, educators, physicians, behavioral health service providers, Residential Care Staff, those who work in the judicial system, parents and any other profession that works with children and families. Once

professionals are educated in using a trauma lens, tools must be provided to front line staff to help assess for trauma and make appropriate referrals for evidence-based treatment.

In New Hampshire, the Division for Children Youth and Families (DCYF) has partnered with the Dartmouth Trauma Interventions Research Center and utilized grant funding to train and provide tools to Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Staff, as well as mental health providers, resource parents, Residential Facility staff and others involved in providing services to children involved in Child Welfare. One of the first grant funded initiative was The Bridge Project. The Bridge Project focused on assisting everyone involved in the Juvenile Justice System to look at cases through a trauma lens, and to screen all adjudicated youth for trauma exposure, post traumatic symptoms, depression and substance abuse in order to refer and provide appropriate treatment to youth in the Juvenile Justice System.

A second initiative was the Breakthrough Series Collaborative. Through this grant funded initiative Child Welfare Staff were trained in using a trauma lens in Child Welfare and to make changes in policy and practice to reflect this view in order to increase placement stability.

Dartmouth Trauma Intervention and Research Center (DTIRC) also received funding to train providers across the state in evidence-based practices for post-traumatic stress disorder. These included Trauma Focused Behavioral Therapy, Parent Child Psychotherapy and Helping the non-Compliant Child. DTIRC has now trained over 300 providers across the state.

The New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families is now involved in two additional projects, The Partners for Change Project (Partners for Change) and The New Hampshire Adoption Preparation and Preservation Project (NHAPP). Partners for Change will bring screening and assessment tools into both Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare that will ensure that children are screened and referred to appropriate treatment based on their screening and will measure their improvement over time in several well-being measures. The Adoption Preparation and Preservation Project carries this one step further by assessing family functioning and integration in pre and post-adoptive families and providing adoption competency training to the Evidence-based Practices providers in order to increase placement stability for pre-adoptive placements and improve adoption outcomes. The projects also includes re configuring service array to align with measured needs and changes to policy and practice to reflect the need for more trauma focused and adoption competent systems of care. Training in Evidence-based Practices' will continue to be provided to community-based providers by DTIRC to ensure that there are evidenced-based practices to meet the needs of children and youth being referred.

Medication monitoring is also a part of the projects and children who are being prescribed in an unsafe manner will be flagged and providers will be given safe prescribing information.

All of the screening and monitoring will be collected in an online data base where both aggregate data and client level data will be monitored by both the child and by the provider to measure outcomes by many different variables.



## CURRENT STATUS OF TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE

Currently Partners for Change Project has been rolled-out in six district offices. A further five offices will be trained in the fall 2015/winter2016. Staff in these offices received training in using trauma and well-being screens with children and youth involved in any open case with both Child Protective Services and Juvenile Justice Services. Over the next two years this project will be rolled out in to all district offices across the state. The online data base is up and running and accessible to Division for Children, Youth and Families Staff at this time. It is not yet accessible to mental health providers. There have been nearly 400 screens completed on children and youth involved in Division for Children, Youth and Families Cases through the Partners for Change Project. More than fifty percent of children screened positive for some form of mental health symptoms and on average between ten to twenty percent screened positive for PTSD. The goal is for these children and youth to be referred to evidence-based mental health treatments based on their symptoms. It is too soon in the project to know if this is occurring with regularity at this point, however this information will be collected and analyzed on an ongoing basis.

The goal of the Adoption Preparation and Preservation Project is to help Division for Children, Youth and Families Staff, community providers and foster/adoptive parents better understand and meet the needs of children who have experienced trauma. Implementation Phase II of the Implementation Plan was approved in April 2015. Implementation of the initiatives will begin in June of 2015 in the Laconia District Office which will be the pilot test site for several elements of the project. Cohort one which will consist of five offices will be trained in the fall 2015 /winter 2016 and the second cohort of five offices will receive training in the interventions in fall 2016 and winter 2017. All permanency staff will be trained in the Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (SAFE), evidence informed home study assessment method created and provided by The Consortium for Children. Private Agencies in New Hampshire that license foster homes will receive this training as well. This will improve the Division's family assessment and matching process by providing more valid evidence-based tools to utilize in making more objective and informed placement decisions. The SAFE will also provide the Division staff with more information to determine the training needs of foster parents in order to create the most helpful ongoing training plans.

In addition to the SAFE the Adoption Preparation and Preservation Project will provide training in Adoption Competency to Division staff and mental health providers. This training will be provided in short sessions for all staff during the implementation period and through a longer training specifically for permanency staff. All staff that complete the training will have a better understanding of the following definition of an Adoption Competent professional:

An Adoption Competent Professional:

- Has an understanding of the nature of adoption as a type of family formation and the characteristics and skills that make adoptive families successful;
- Understands the importance of an individual or couples motivation to adopt and infertility issues and the impact this has on adoptive family formation;
- Has a family based, strength-based, child centered, culturally competent and evidence-based approach to working with adoptive families and birth families;

- Has Knowledge and understanding of the impact of developmental stages on grief/loss and family formation;
- Has the skills to engage families within the context of other systems they are involved with;
- Has knowledge, skills and experience in working with individuals with a history of abuse, neglect and/or trauma;
- Understands the impact of disrupted attachment on children's mental and emotional health and has knowledge and skills to address disrupted attachment; and
- Employs knowledge, skills and experience in working with adoptive families and birth families.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families Staff will be trained in administering; understanding and using screening tools with pre adoptive families that will help assess family functioning and family integration. These tools will then be used to help determine the child's permanency plan and will inform case plan goals for the child/youth and pre adoptive family.

#### FIVE YEAR VISION FOR TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE

In five years it is anticipated that the tools and strategies of both projects will have become established in the Division for Children, Youth and Families Practice across the State. The Division anticipates that children will be routinely screened for trauma events, symptoms, and well-being measures and referred for appropriate evidence-based treatments. Ongoing monitoring of symptoms will be used to guide case planning and impact service provision. This will lead to greater placement stability for children in care and better well-being outcomes. It is anticipated that all staff and providers will have a solid knowledge of trauma and its implications for children in Child Welfare and how to address and mitigate the effects.

Through the Adoption Preparation and Preservation Project it is anticipated that in five years the Division for Children, Youth and Families will have revised their resource parent screening and training process so that it utilizes more accurate and objective measures which can then be utilized to assess compatibility with children who are in need of placement. Mental Health providers will have a greater understanding of the needs of adoptive families and will be trained in providing services to children in pre and post-adoptive families. The Division for Children, Youth and Families will have revised policy, practice and service array to be better aligned with the findings of the screening and assessments.

Additionally, the Division plans to establish a clinical consultant position within the state office that will be available to staff and to the Division's Education Partners to assist screening, assessment and treatment, and to facilitate referrals to evidence-based treatments when assistance is needed. This position would also be responsible for keeping the Division's practice and policy current regarding evidence-based screening, assessment, and mental health treatment.

### CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Both Partners for Change and Adoption Preparation and Preservation Project have a rigorous evaluation component. The Center for Program Design and Evaluation Design at Dartmouth has four evaluators who are providing continuous monitoring and evaluation of all activities related to these projects. Members of the Divisions Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement are also on the leadership team for both projects and participate in the steering committee for both projects.

### TRAINING CONSIDERATIONS

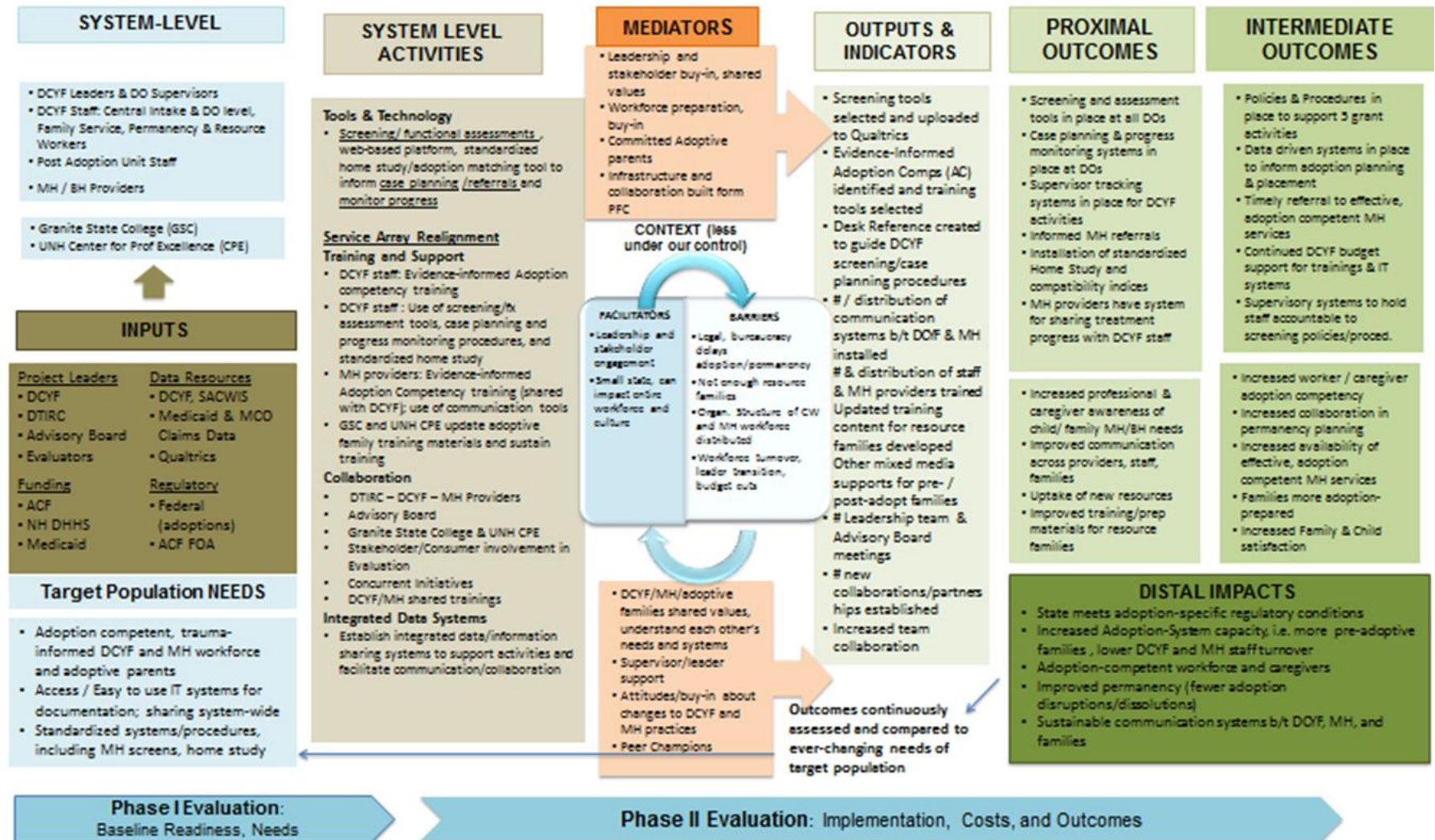
Leadership in both Partners for Change and Adoption Preparation and Preservation Project includes staff from the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement and staff from both of the resource training partners; Granite State College and the Center for Professional Excellence in Child Welfare are involved in the steering committee and affinity groups. For sustainability purposes both projects will focus on incorporating changes in training for staff and providers into the Divisions ongoing training program so that after the project is complete the training for staff and providers will continue in an ongoing manner.

### SUPPORTS NEEDED TO ACHIEVE GOAL

In order to achieve the goals of the projects participation from all levels of the Division must occur and strong partnerships with other agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services and community partners must be created, nurtured and sustained. These initiatives must be supported by leadership and their value recognized and celebrated. The Clinical Consultant position described above will be integral in sustaining and continuing to build trauma-informed practices in the Division. The logic models for each of these projects are included.

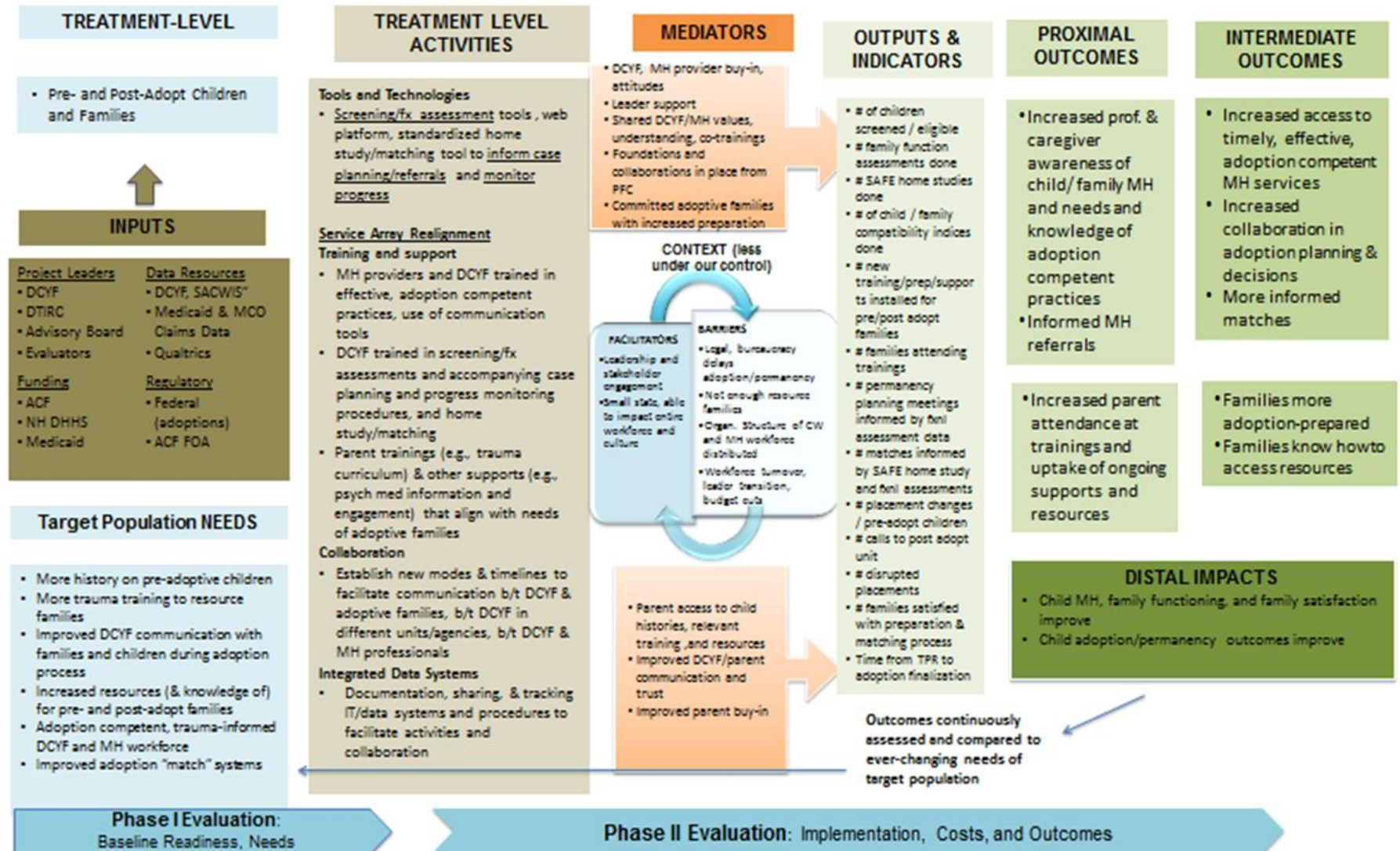
## #7. LOGIC MODELS

**Principal Aims:** The New Hampshire Adoption Preparation and Preservation Project aims to improve child social and emotional well-being, placement stability and family functioning in pre- and post-adoptive settings by increasing system and workforce adoption and trauma competency.





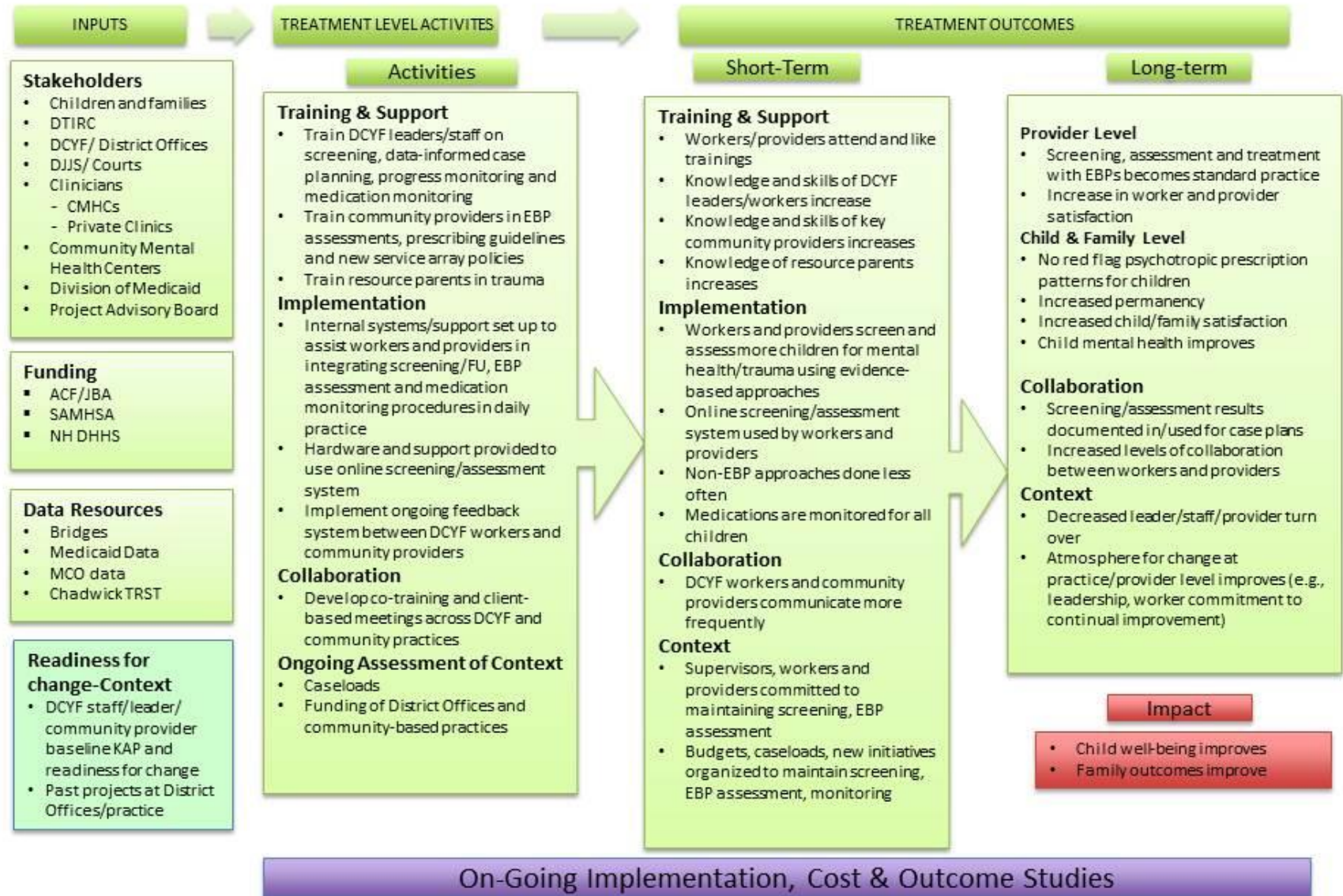
**Principal Aims:** The New Hampshire Adoption Preparation and Preservation Project aims to improve child social and emotional well-being, placement stability and family functioning in pre- and post-adoptive settings by increasing system and workforce adoption and trauma competency.



## The Change Project:

### Collaborative Trauma-Informed Welfare System for NH Children and Families

**Major Goal:** Improve the social-emotional well-being and developmentally appropriate functioning of children and families served by NH DCYF, and optimizing DCYF's effectiveness in meeting the individual mental and behavioral needs of the families it serves.





## **FUTURE CFSP GOALS**

### **Capacity Building Center for States Technical Assistance**

In March 2015, the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families began receiving technical assistance (TA) from the Capacity Building Center for States. The Center for States Liaisons has worked with the Division for Children, Youth and Families Administration on developing priority areas for capacity building for improvements in the Division's practice.

The areas that have been identified for exploration and capacity building are:

- Assessment of abuse and neglect business practice exploration;
- Recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive parents business practice exploration and strategies;
- Quality Assurance/Continuous Quality Improvement enhancements; and
- Service Array expansion.

These priority areas were identified through an assessment process conducted by the Center for States in collaboration with New Hampshire. Following a review of the assessment DCYF determined that the two primary areas that required deeper exploration and root cause analysis were the assessment business processes and foster care recruitment and retention practices. On June 29, 2015 a meeting was facilitated by the Center for States Liaisons and a subject matter expert to begin mapping the business process and developing a theory of change for the assessment work. Ultimately the goal is to streamline the work done by assessment staff to assure timely, effective and efficient interventions are provided to children and families who come to the attention of DCYF.

An initial work plan for the identified areas has been developed and is in the process of being finalized and approved. Elements of work in these areas will be reported on further in future APSR's.

## Section 4: Services

### COMPREHENSIVE FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

The Division continues to envision contracts being in place for statewide Comprehensive Family Support Services programs covering all eleven district office and the telework unit's catchment areas. Through the Comprehensive Family Support Services (CFSS) Program, community-based agencies provide support services to approximately 871 families annually (2014 CFSS Data). The programs assist families and children by promoting family wellness, decreasing family stress, and preventing abuse and neglect. Division staff identify and assist families with multiple stressors by providing multivariate services, which encourage and promote the development of healthy families. The program seeks to intervene before the occurrence of abuse or neglect on behalf of all families and also serves families in the process of reunification. Through a collaborative effort, the Division for Children, Youth and Families and the Division for Public Health have combined the Comprehensive Family Support Services and the Home Visiting New Hampshire contracts into one statewide comprehensive program serving New Hampshire families. This new enlarged program will provide the ongoing comprehensive family support while partnering with Home Visiting New Hampshire to enhance its capability by delivering quality and valued home visiting. Both Divisions are excited about this new endeavor and look forward to the ongoing successful collaborative union.

#### Goals:

- Promote healthy growth and development of children by assisting families in identifying and addressing any home or community barriers to children's success in school and the larger society;
- Empower families as advocates for themselves and their children by collaborating with families and communities in the development of a comprehensive array of local, family-centered and culturally diverse services; and
- Reduce the incidence of violence towards children by providing supportive services to families including:
  - Supporting parents who are experiencing social, emotional, physical and/or mental health related problems that interfere with their abilities to parent and provide an acceptable standard of care for their children;
  - Promoting safe, nurturing environments for children by educating parents in child development, child health and safety, and parenting skills;
  - Working with parents to identify their strengths and challenges related to parenting, with consideration to family, values, culture and/or personal history, and to assist them to deal effectively with overcoming barriers that impede healthy development;

- Helping families learn coping and problem-solving skills which will assist them in their everyday lives;
- Enhancing family development by assisting parents to further their education, find employment and access community resources; and
- Supporting families in their home communities by providing resource and referral information, and linkage with Family Resource Centers and other community-based agencies that support families.

Services to be offered by the contract agencies include:

- Home Visiting;
- Trauma-Informed Services;
- Early Childhood Programs/Child Development Education;
- Parent Education and Support;
- Quality Early Care and Learning;
- Medical & Health Education;
- Adult Literacy and Higher Education support;
- Life Skills Training;
- Family Mentoring and Advocacy;
- Independent Living skills;
- Child care Resource and Referral;
- Family Empowerment; and
- Information and Referrals to other community-based agencies.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE CHILDREN'S TRUST

Please refer to [New Hampshire Children's Trust](#) in Section Two under "Agency Responsiveness to the Community" for further description.

## EDUCATION SERVICES

Please refer to the [Education Services and Support](#) in Section Two under “Agency Responsiveness to the Community” for further description.

## FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION SERVICES

Please refer to [Family Violence Prevention Services](#) in Section Two under “Service Array” for further description.

## PROJECT FIRST STEP

Please refer to [Project First Step](#) in Section Two under “Service Array” for further description.

## RELATIVE CARE PROGRAM

The New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families has had a Relative Care Specialist since April of 2008. The role of this part-time specialist is to ensure that relatives caring for children in New Hampshire have access to community services and are treated in accordance with Practice Model Beliefs and Principles. This position can assist relatives directly through referrals, support relatives looking to care for a child who resides in another state while waiting for the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) process to commence, support staff in district offices through assistance with home studies and track the Division’s compliance with Fostering Connections.

Several years ago, a relative caregiver needs assessment was completed in collaboration with Granite State College and NHRAPP (NH Relatives as Parents Project) and the information that was collected was incorporated into a Resource Guide for New Hampshire Relative Caregivers. Information about available resources continues to be provided to the community and to relative caregivers both within the Division for Children, Youth and Families and those not involved with the Division.

An agreement between the Division for Children, Youth and Families and Division of Client Services was revised and re-introduced to the field. The agreement has reduced the amount of time that a relative needs to wait for financial benefits from twenty to ten days. It has allowed for Division for Children, Youth and Families Staff, both Child Protective Service Workers and Fiscal Specialists to take a more proactive approach to assisting relative caregivers in this area.

A training curriculum was developed for Relative Caregivers in collaboration with Granite State College. *Relatively Speaking* is an online e-workbook course that is covered in three three-hour modules; “*About You*”, “*About the Child*” and “*About the Parent*”. The course has been offered at least once every semester and each course has been both well attended and received. All New Hampshire Relative Caregivers are eligible to take this course and Granite State College

has offered this course to child care providers throughout the state. These three modules are credited towards pre-service training for those relatives who opt to become licensed foster homes.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families' Newsletter for Foster Care and Adoptive families, the Connector, is inclusive of relative caregivers. Each issue features an article specific to relative care and the unique issues that can develop between families. With appropriate permission, relative caregivers are interviewed and featured in the newsletter.

The Relative Care Program brochure was created and printed for distribution to all offices. The brochure provides information to relative caregivers on what to expect and what is required when becoming a Division for Children, Youth and Families Relative Caregiver. The brochure will assist the Child Protective Service Workers in engaging with family members to provide relevant and accurate information about becoming a provider for the State of New Hampshire.

A tracking method was developed to help create a database of all relative care providers involved with the Division. This involved each relative provider receiving a provider ID number whether or not they were opting to become licensed. The information is collected from the provider on the day of placement using Form 2273, the Relative Care Agreement, and Form 2140, the Resource Enrollment/Change Form. Enrolled relative care providers receive a specified letter or email informing them of activities and available supports and other relevant information. A Relative Care Program Report is completed each month to provide an accurate and timely tracking method for all relative caregivers with a child placed in the custody of New Hampshire. Improvements were made to the report making it easier to track relative home entries and removals, and the reason for the removal. Queried information reflects children placed by Child Protective Services (CPS) and Juvenile Justice Services (JJS) with both non-licensed and licensed relative providers.

Unlike other states, New Hampshire does not mandate that a relative caregiver become a licensed foster home. If a family identifies that a relative is available to accept placement of their child, the relative needs only to submit to a home inspection, Central Registry and Criminal Record check to accept an emergency placement. This is considered an unpaid placement and the worker immediately assists in completing an application for family assistance thus preventing the unnecessary delay of financial support to the relative caregiver. Relative caregivers are encouraged however, to become licensed foster homes. To reduce the barriers to licensing, relatives may be granted non-safety related waivers for licensing requirements such as pre-service training, high school diplomas and insurance. For the purpose of licensing waivers, The Division for Children, Youth and Families considers relatives up to the sixth degree and will equally consider the relatives of half-siblings if it is shown that a pre-existing relationship exists between the relative caregiver and the child. Between July of 2008 and June of 2014, seventy-four non-safety waivers were granted to relative caregivers in order to become licensed foster parents.

As of April 30, 2015, of the 534 children residing in family foster care, 146 are placed in relative care.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families seeks to continue the relative care program in effort to promote relative caregiving for children and families involved with the Division and compliance with Fostering Connections to Success Act.

## ACTIVITIES THAT THE STATE HAS UNDERTAKEN FOR CHILDREN ADOPTED FROM OTHER COUNTRIES

The State of New Hampshire has ten licensed adoption child placing agencies available to families who have the capacity to complete inter-country adoptions. All adoption agencies must be licensed by the State of New Hampshire, Division for Children, Youth and Families, as a Child Placing Agency. This allows the agency to conduct home studies, make placements of children, supervise the placements and file adoption petitions in the court of jurisdiction. RSA 170-E: 27 states, “No person may establish, maintain, operate or conduct any agency for child care or for child-placing without a license or permit issued by the department” RSA 170-E: 30 allows the Division for Children, Youth and Families to examine the facility or agency, and investigate the program and person or persons responsible for the care of children. The institution or Child Placing Agency must obtain and provide receipts of approval of state and local requirements pertaining to health, safety and zoning. In addition, per RSA 170-E: 29 the Division for Children, Youth and Families conducts Criminal Records and Central Registry checks on staff employed by the agency.

In New Hampshire, the Directors of the Adoption Child Placing Agencies meet every three months. The members discuss current issues and concerns in the practice of adoption. The agencies have collaborated on standards for the placement of children in adoptive homes. These standards are based on New Hampshire law, Division policy, and best practice. The standards adopted as rules in April 2003 were revised and adopted in April 2011.

The New Hampshire Child Placing Agencies have seen a decline in the number of international adoptions over the last several years while private domestic adoptions appear to be on the rise. The decrease in international adoptions is attributed to the fact that many countries have changed their adoption policies and the cost of adopting internationally has become prohibitive for some families. Child placing agencies are focusing more on recruitment efforts, home studies and post-adoption services such as searches.

New Hampshire statute addresses specific adoption requirements for inter-country adoptions. If the child is adopted from another country the adoption petition must include documentation indicating compliance with RSA 170-B: 28. “Any person or any public or private agency, corporation, or organization, before bringing or causing any child to be brought into this state from any other state or country for the purpose of adoption, or receiving such child in this state for such purpose, shall make application to the commissioner of the department. Such application shall be in the form prescribed by the commissioner and shall contain such information as the commissioner may require, including any information required to comply with the provisions of RSA 170-A. No placement of the child shall occur until permission has been obtained from the commissioner. No petition for adoption of a child from another state or



country shall be granted in the absence of compliance with this section.” This responsibility has been delegated to the Administrator for the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children.

In addition, New Hampshire statute also addresses the legality of international adoptions. RSA 170-B: 29 states “A decree of court terminating the relationship of parent and child or establishing the relation by adoption issued pursuant to due process of law by a court of any other jurisdiction within or outside the United States shall be recognized in this state and the rights and obligations of the parties as to matters within the jurisdiction of this state shall be determined as though the decree was issued by a court of this state.”

## **CHILDREN ADOPTED INTERNATIONALLY WHO HAVE ENTERED STATE CUSTODY**

In 2005, the Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families developed a Bridges Data collection component for inter-country adoptions. This report reflects the following information:

In State Fiscal Year 2014, two internationally adopted children entered State custody.

## **SERVICES FOR CHILDREN UNDER AGE 5**

New Hampshire assesses the developmental needs and provides services for infants, toddlers, and children under age five on an ongoing basis throughout the Division’s involvement with a family. Prevention, early identification and intervention are at the forefront when assessing safety and managing future risk of this population. At the onset of a protective investigation the Division for Children, Youth and Families Staff work with families and use a Solution Based approach to identify the developmental stage of the family based on the ages of the children. An assessment of the activities and tasks common to families at that stage occurs including discussion with the parents regarding the physical, educational, emotional, and mental health needs of the children. Referrals for services are based on the identified needs of the family and the children. Rehabilitative services provided are aimed at increasing parental functioning as it relates to understanding and meeting the needs of the children including: nutritional, behavioral and developmental, as well as maintaining a safe and stable environment. Case planning includes ongoing review of outcomes related to the service provision and impact on the child’s development. Given the vulnerability of young children involved in a Child Protective Services case with parental/caregiver substance abuse, the Division for Children, Youth and Families has developed an enhanced practice to ensure the safety of these young children, which includes additional caseworker visits.

In founded cases, children under the age of three are referred to Early Support and Services (ESS) for a developmental assessment. An Early Supports and Services coordinator is assigned for every family/child when it is determined the child has an identified need or qualifies under identified risk factors for developmental supports. Children over age three are referred by the assigned Child Protective Service Worker to the local mental health center for mental health/trauma screening and to the school department for early intervention when there is an

identified need. In addition, infants, toddlers, and children under five with significant medical needs may be referred to the Department of Health and Human Services, Special Medical Services. Special Medical Services (SMS) provides medical and financial services to children with special health care needs (CSHCN). Children with special health care needs are those who have, or are at increased risk for, chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional conditions, which require health and related services of a type beyond that required by children generally. Special Medical Services helps New Hampshire families with health information and support services and helps them with specialty health care services for their eligible children. Special Medical Services also provides care coordination services, support for child development and neuro-motor clinics, nutritional and feeding/swallowing consultation, psychological and physical therapy services.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families continues to conduct Permanency Planning Team (PPT) meetings on a regular basis regarding all children in placement. These meetings focus on identification of the child's current and future needs which may include, but are not limited to, developmental, social and emotional needs, and services needed including early intervention, child care, after school programs, respite, medical, dental, and mental health care. Discussions at PPT meetings, in one-to-one supervision, and in meeting with foster or pre-adoptive parents include assessing the parent/child attachment and a consistent review of attachment between the caregiver and the children including the impact of trauma on the short-term and long-term development of the child.

Youth under age five who remain in care longer are children with significant physical and developmental disabilities. These children require targeted recruitment efforts and the Division for Children, Youth and Families works closely with the Child Placing Agencies to help identify and recruit families that may be willing and able to commit to these children when reunification cannot occur.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families is currently involved in two additional projects, The Partners for Change Project (Partners for Change) and The New Hampshire Adoption Preparation and Preservation Project (NHAPP). Further information is available in Section Three under "Objective 3: Trauma-informed Practice".

The Division for Children, Youth and Families will be tracking the number of children under age of five in foster care by utilizing Chapin Hall Multistate Foster Care Data Archive (FCDA). FCDA is a longitudinal analytical tool that enables the Division to conduct powerful statistical analyses of existing data and monitor outcomes. Using this tool the Division will be able to monitor those children and their outcomes on an ongoing basis. The tool will enable the Division to also track the following demographic information about those children - gender, race, and ethnicity.

	CY 2008	CY 2009	CY 2010	CY 2011	CY 2012	CY 2013	CY 2014
<b>Total # of children who entered care</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>385</b>
<b>Total # of Children who entered care at age &lt;=5</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>209</b>
Children who entered care at age <1	75	65	59	68	73	70	70
Children who entered care at age 1-2	62	66	69	74	63	63	67
Children who entered care at age 3-5	65	78	72	70	71	65	72
<b>% of children who entered care at age &lt;=5</b>	<b>46.54%</b>	<b>48.49%</b>	<b>51.55%</b>	<b>49.65%</b>	<b>47.70%</b>	<b>48.06%</b>	<b>54.29%</b>
<b>Total # of children Still in Care as of 03-31-2012 (for CY 2012 as of 03-31-13; for CY 2013 as of 03/31/2014; for CY 2014 as of 3/31/2015)</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>252</b>
# of children still in care as of 03-31-2012 who were at age <=5 when entered care *	2	24	63	139	140	114	132
% of children still in care as of 03-31-2012 who were at age <=5 when entered care **	7.69%	43.64%	53.39%	53.05%	49.12%	50.67%	52.38%
# of children still in care as of 03-31-2012 who were at age <=5 on 03-31-2012 *	1	12	53	128	134	106	120
% of children still in care as of 03-31-2012 who were at age <=5 on 03-31-2012 **	3.85%	21.82%	44.92%	48.85%	47.02%	47.11%	47.62%

\* for CY 2012 as of 03-31-13; for CY 2013 as of 03/31/2014; for CY 2014 as of 3/31/2015

\*\* Percent is based on total number of children that were Still in Care as of 03-31-2012 (for CY 2012 as of 03-31-13; for CY 2013 as of 03-31-2014; for CY 2014 as of 3-31-2015)

	CY 2008	CY 2009	CY 2010	CY 2011	CY 2012	CY 2013	CY 2014
<b>Total # of children Still in Care as of 03-31-2012 (for CY 2012 as of 03-31-13; for CY 2013 as of 03-31-14; for CY 2014 as of 3-31-2015)</b>	26	55	118	262	285	225	252
<b># of children still in care as of 03-31-2012 (for CY 2012 as of 03-31-13; for CY 2013 as of 03-31-14; for CY 2014 as of 3-31-2015) who were at age &lt;=5 when entered care</b>	2	24	63	139	140	114	132
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>							
White Non-Hispanic	2	22	45	105	101	91	88
% White Non-Hispanic *	100.00%	91.67%	71.43%	75.54%	72.14%	79.82%	66.67%
African American Non-Hispanic	0	1	5	6	5	3	9
% African American Non-Hispanic *	0.00%	4.17%	7.94%	4.32%	3.57%	2.63%	6.82%
Asian and Pacific	0	0	1	1	0	1	2
% Asian and Pacific *	0.00%	0.00%	1.59%	0.72%	0.00%	0.88%	1.52%
Hispanic	0	0	5	15	16	4	19
% Hispanic *	0.00%	0.00%	7.94%	10.79%	11.43%	3.51%	14.39%
Native American	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
% Native American *	0.00%	0.00%	4.76%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Other	0	0	0	1	3	0	0
% Other *	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.72%	2.14%	0.00%	0.00%
Unknown	0	1	4	11	15	15	14
% Unknown *	0.00%	4.17%	6.35%	7.91%	10.71%	13.16%	10.61%
<b>Gender</b>							
Female	1	12	36	63	62	57	69
Male	1	12	27	76	78	57	63
<b># of children still in care as of 03-31-2012 (for CY 2012 as of 03-31-13; for CY 2013 as of 03-31-14; for CY 2014 as of 3-31-2015) who were at age &lt;=5 on 03-31-2012 (for CY 2012 as of 03-31-13; for CY 2013 as of 03-31-14; for CY 2014 as of 3-31-2015)</b>	1	12	53	128	134	106	120
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>							
White Non-Hispanic	1	11	39	97	96	85	79
% White Non-Hispanic **	100.00%	91.67%	73.58%	75.78%	71.64%	80.19%	65.83%
African American Non-Hispanic	0	1	5	4	4	3	9
% African American Non-Hispanic **	0.00%	8.33%	9.43%	3.13%	2.99%	2.83%	7.50%
Asian and Pacific	0	0	1	1	0	1	2
% Asian and Pacific **	0.00%	0.00%	1.89%	0.78%	0.00%	0.94%	1.67%
Hispanic	0	0	3	14	16	3	17
% Hispanic **	0.00%	0.00%	5.66%	10.94%	11.94%	2.83%	14.17%
Native American	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
% Native American **	0.00%	0.00%	1.89%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Other	0	0	0	1	3	0	0
% Other **	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.78%	2.24%	0.00%	0.00%
Unknown	0	0	4	11	15	14	13
% Unknown **	0.00%	0.00%	7.55%	8.59%	11.19%	13.21%	10.83%
<b>Gender</b>							
Female	1	5	31	58	60	53	63
Male	0	7	22	70	74	53	57

\* percent is based on number of children still in care as of 03-31-2012 (for CY 2012 as of 03-31-13; for CY 2013 as of 03-31-14; for CY 2014 as of 3-31-2015) who were at age <=5 when entered care

\*\* percent is based on number of children still in care as of 03-31-2012 (for CY 2012 as of 03-31-13; for CY 2013 as of 03-31-14; for CY 2014 as of 3-31-2015) who were at age <=5 on 03-31-2012 (for CY 2012 as of 03-31-13; for CY 2013 as of 03-31-14; for CY 2014 as of 3-31-2015)

## FOSTER CARE PROGRAM

New Hampshire believes that selecting the most appropriate family for a child who cannot safely return home can reduce the trauma of separation and loss for the child, can increase the probability of a successful placement and ideally, can create a lifelong connection or permanent home for the child, if needed. New Hampshire diligently recruits for potential foster and adoptive families that reflect not only the ethnic and racial heritage and culture of the children in State care, but families that are naturally linked to the neighborhood and communities where children reside.

While efforts are made to recruit foster and adoptive parents who reflect the diversity of the children who need foster and adoptive homes, practice does not delay the selection of a family for the purpose of finding a racial or ethnic match. The Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) Staff as well as providers and caregivers participate in ongoing training to promote cultural competency. Through training and ongoing support, the Division makes efforts to ensure that resource families are culturally responsive to child(ren)'s needs regardless of whether they have different backgrounds.

The Foster Care Program resides within the Bureau of Community and Family Supports. It provides licensed resource homes and a family experience for children who cannot be safely cared for in their own homes. The program or unit is also responsible to ensure that all licensing is in compliance with State statute and rule along with policy and program development. The program consists of a Manager, a State Office Resource Worker, a part-time Relative Care Specialist and a part-time Adoption Recruiter. This unit also operates as a Central Inquiry Unit and provides the first contact with all potential applicants calling the Division for licensing information. On average, the unit communicates with fifty people per month, with a noticeable increase in calls following large recruitment events or media attention. The Central Inquiry Unit has ensured timely contact and consistent information is delivered to all people calling interested in the Foster Care and Adoption Programs allowing Resource Workers to focus on other responsibilities. Along with inquiry data, the unit tracks when the applicant has returned paperwork, started and completed initial training and whether or not the person ends up getting licensed. The Program works closely with Resource Workers in the district offices and the Child Placing Agencies who are certified to provide treatment level foster care services.

The District Office Resource Worker position resides within the Bureau of Child Protection. There are fourteen Resource Workers placed in the twelve district offices. The Manchester and Southern Offices have two positions due to their volume of cases. The Resource Worker position recruits, assesses, trains and licenses resource families, matches children in need of out-of-home care with an appropriate family and supports the foster, relative and adoptive parents in their catchment area. Matching the child with a resource home considers the foster parent's ability to meet the unique needs of the child and help achieve the permanency goals.

There are currently nine licensed Child Placing Agencies that are also certified to provide foster care. The foster care provided by the agencies is more intensive and offers therapeutic treatment

to children who experience more challenges. A Licensing Worker within the agency performs job duties similar to the Division's Resource Workers.

New Hampshire is a dual-licensed state and applicants to become both foster and adoptive parents follow the same training, assessment and home study process. Recruitment and retention responsibilities and activities of the Division are supported by two contract providers. These contracts are currently with Child and Family Services for the "Recruitment and Retention for Resource Family Homes" and with Bethany Christian Services through its Faithfully One-by-One program for the "Community and Faith Based Initiative" (CFBI).

The Division has always recognized and appreciated that the best recruitment tool for new foster and adoptive families is a well-supported network of current foster and adoptive families. There remains a strong collaborative relationship with the New Hampshire Foster and Adoptive Parent Association (NHFAPA) and DCYF values the hard work and commitment of the parents actively involved with this Association who offer peer support to fellow families and work hard to recruit new families to serve children in need.

## Current Status and Data Considerations

As of April 2015, there were 616 licensed resource homes in the State of New Hampshire. In April of 2010, there were 896 homes. The current pool of homes reflects a thirty-one percent decrease from the number of licensed homes five years ago. Of the current homes, 466 homes are licensed by the Division. The remaining twenty-four percent of these homes are managed by Child Placing Agencies. Of the homes that are managed by DCYF, forty percent are licensed for child specific use only or are families who only prefer to be matched with legally free younger children. Of the remaining homes, more than half are unavailable to new placements because they are full or have a child in their care who cannot reside with other children or who is on hold following an adoption. The data shows that while the Division has been consistently closing more homes than it has been licensing for the past five years, the rate of closing is decreasing.

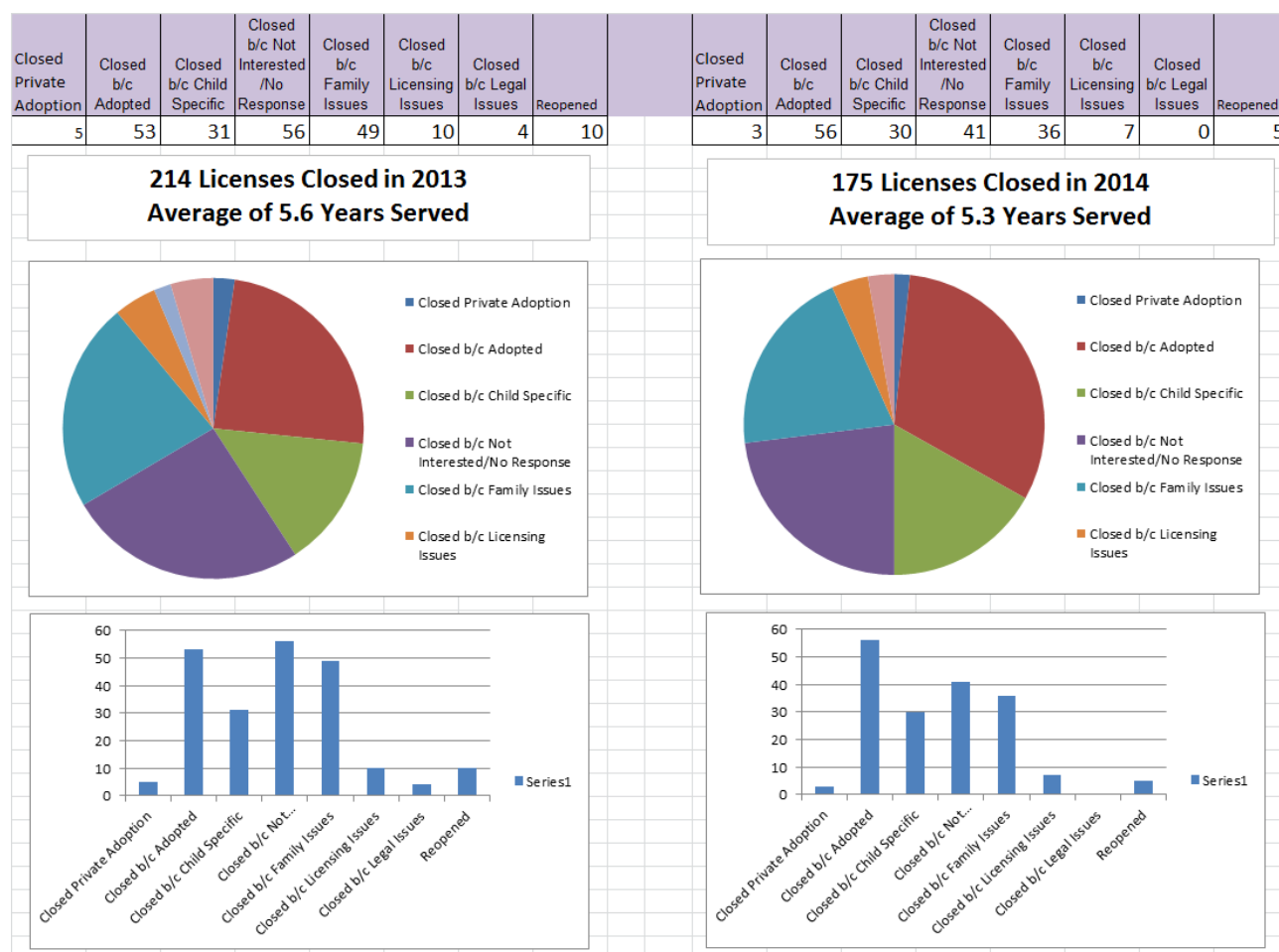
May through April	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of DCYF foster homes (April)	562	506	462	507	468
Number of child specific foster homes	45	33	58	83	134
Adoption only foster homes	40	32	22	34	52
Number of Inquiries in year	729	673	512	668	641
Initial training completed in year	309	340	373	230	219
Number of new foster homes licensed	143	136	149	122	127
Number of homes closed	265	226	207	188	179

There are many factors, both positive and negative, which have caused this drop in available resources. The Division is very clear in its messaging that foster parents are expected to be part of the team and engage with the child's parents when this can be done safely. There is equally clear messaging that the Division wants permanency for all children and will not support long term foster care as a plan unless all other avenues are explored and exhausted. Over the last five



years, some foster parents have chosen to not renew their license as they do not agree with our beliefs around engaging with birth parents and permanency.

In an effort to better understand the declining number of homes over the last several years, the Foster Care Program has given more attention to the reasons submitted when a license is closed. This is required information from the Resource and Licensing Workers. The Division has always sent out a closing survey to providers leaving the system to offer them a chance to send in their own input on the decision to close their license. The return rate on the surveys is probably less than thirty percent but they are often sent in when people have been either extremely pleased or extremely frustrated with their experience with the Division and Foster Care Agencies. When there is no clear reason for the closing of a home, the foster care unit researches the outcomes for the children that had been served by the former foster home.



	2013	2014
Number of Licenses closed	214	179
Average length of service	5.63	5.26
Number of children (unduplicated) they served	690	699
Number of children they adopted	104	86
Number of children they reunified	125	174
Number of children who moved to relative homes	58	69
Number of licenses closed due to adoption	53	54

Many newer homes become licensed with the primary purpose of adopting from foster care. When this goal has been met for the family, they do not choose to remain licensed. Some of the more experienced, long-term families have simply retired and moved on to enjoy a different stage in their life. Other closing summaries indicate that families have closed because of the way they have been treated by staff. Lack of communication is the most frequent negative comment followed by a feeling that the family was not told the “whole story” about the child placed in their home. Some families have closed because their desire was to foster and they felt pressured to accept being the pre-adoptive family for concurrent planning. Improving customer service to DCYF Resource Families and providers is an area that must be addressed in the next five years. The data shows that there is a concerning shortage of available quality foster homes in the State and the Division cannot afford to lose more.

## Five Year Vision and Goals

The positive and extensive changes in field practice over the last several years and the encouraging initiatives which the Division has created are all improving the lives of children and families in New Hampshire. The transformation in practice and in the culture and climate of the Division has required the commitment and dedication of all staff. This level of dedicated attention coupled with the fiscal restraints necessitated by the State budget, has diminished the overall ability to maintain focus, time and attention to the recruitment and retention of resource families at a Division level. Over the next five years, the Division plans to strengthen its foster care and adoption programs and increase the number and quality of resource families available to children in need of out-of-home care.

The overall goal in the five year plan is to increase permanency outcomes for vulnerable children in New Hampshire by engaging in a systems change effort to strengthen diligent recruitment.

The overall strategies to reach this goal include that DCYF:

- Continue the Division’s partnership with the current and any future recruitment, retention and technical assistance contractor to work towards enhancing recruitment and retention strategies, increasing media attention for resource homes, support for the Division’s foster, relative and adoptive parents and assistance in finding permanent homes for waiting children;

- Strengthen the collaboration between all state partners who are involved with the recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive families including Community and Faith Based Partners, Wendy's Wonderful Kids and all of the private Child Placing Agencies;
- Require that all Resource Workers for the Division and all Licensing Workers for Child Placing Agencies providing Foster Care Programs use a unified home study assessment and matching process (such as SAFE) so that all foster families are evaluated fairly and consistently. Training for this is being provided in the fall of 2015 in conjunction with the NHAPP grant.
- Work closely with Public Information Office to utilize the various social media outlets to enhance public awareness of the Foster Care Program along with the Division's recruitment and retention efforts;
- Expand the Central Inquiry System to continue the consistent messaging that is given to all prospective foster and adoptive parents throughout the licensing process and to track both the effectiveness of the recruitment initiatives and the progress of the applicants;
- Continue the child specific efforts to recruit permanent families for New Hampshire's current Waiting Children and ensure that youth exiting foster care receive the support, information, resources and life-long connections they need to reach their potential as young adults;
- Continue to support relative caregivers through licensing waivers for non-safety related requirements, referrals to community-based supports and training;
- Advocate with the assistance of the State Fire Marshall to have a uniform fire inspection process throughout the state to remove barriers to licensing and create a system of equality.
- Consistently assess foster parents to ensure that the Division is meeting their needs as resource families, especially in relation to the child placed in their home and guiding them to the support and training that is most beneficial to meet their unique needs;
- Continue to partner with NHFAPA to ensure that the organization is restored to a strong and viable resource for foster and adoptive families along with retaining their advocacy for children in need;
- Support all foster resource families through training and supervision as they engage more closely with birth parents and develop a better understanding of the importance of family connections for all children;
- Work closely with the Parent Partner Program to continue to test the Better Together with Birth and Foster Parents Workshop Training and incorporate the methodology into ongoing training to support working relationships between parents;

- Work closely with the Parent Partner Program to complete the design and launch of a Reunification Mentoring Service in New Hampshire in which experienced foster parents would provide one-on-one coaching to birth families working towards reunification.
- Provide additional resources and training to all families and providers to better understand the effects of trauma on children and families and to ensure the coordination of community-based care; and
- Incorporate the Practice Model Beliefs and Principles and Strategies, such as Solution Based Casework into DCYF practice and every day interactions with all resource families to improve customer service delivery to these important partners.

## **ADOPTION AND POST-ADOPTION SERVICES**

Please refer to [Adoption and Post-Adoption Services](#) in Section Two “Service Array” for a further description.

## **PARENT PARTNER PROGRAM**

Please refer to the Division’s [Parent Partner Program](#) in Section Two “Agency Responsiveness to the Community” for a further description.

## **FAMILY ASSESSMENT AND INCLUSIVE REUNIFICATION (FAIR) PROGRAM**

The Division for Children, Youth and Families maintains a contract for the provision of Administrative Case Reviews (ACR) for children and youth who are in the care and custody of the Division for Children, Youth and Families and are placed in out-of-home care for six months or more. Qualified Child Welfare Professionals who are not responsible for direct case management conduct the reviews. As such, the reviewers serve as an objective, yet highly qualified third party. The role of the ACR is to ensure case planning activities achieve the best possible outcomes for children and families.

The ACR Program was initially designed to ensure that Division for Children, Youth and Families’ Cases were in conformity with the Federal Child Welfare Requirements. The Division for Children, Youth and Families modified its ACR Process during the previous Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) cycle. This process became known as the Family Assessment and Inclusive Reunification (FAIR) program. Instead of focusing on just compliance, FAIR meetings serve as the Division’s Formal Family Engagement Strategy for out-of-home placement cases. The primary focus of FAIR is to engage families in achieving the best permanency plan for their case from the beginning of the placement.

In the current CFSP cycle, the evaluation of FAIR has and will continue to focus on the practice outcomes related to the following areas:

- Enhanced family engagement in case planning for their child in care;
- Improved meeting outcomes and logistics;
- Increased parent, child/youth and family support attendance at FAIR meetings;
- Reduced the length of time in care for children and youth; and
- Achievement of permanency plans in a timely manner.

Additionally, as a core family engagement strategy, parent and child and/or youth attendance is critical. The following attendance statistics are included in the monthly FAIR report:

- Attendance by district office;
- Attendance by participant (mother, father, youth, natural support, etc.); and
- Attendance by permanency goal (Reunification, APPLA, Adoption, etc.).

Using the above criteria will allow the Division to continue addressing any concerns in attendance at a local level and measure the success of having parent attendance for reunification cases and youth attendance for APPLA Cases, for example. As stated in the 2010-2014 Final Report, preliminary information indicates a higher percentage of parents attending FAIR meetings in which the case plan goal is reunification as opposed to other permanency goals. The Division would like to see a twenty percent improvement in attendance for parents and children and youth for all permanency goals by the end of the current CFSP cycle.

By utilizing Title IV-B Subpart 1 and Subpart 2 funds, the Division for Children, Youth and Families has sustained the FAIR program through contracts with six independent FAIR Facilitators. The Division for Children, Youth and Families has maintained supervisory responsibility of the FAIR program. Having six independent contractors and supervision of the program in the Division for Children, Youth and Families has afforded the Division increased financial flexibility and improved programmatic oversight to sustain the FAIR program for the foreseeable future.

Current data pertaining to the FAIR Program can be found in Section Two under “Case Review System”.

## Section 5: Consultation and Coordination between States and Tribes

The Division for Children, Youth and Families has continued its commitment to ensure that provisions of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) are meaningfully followed. According to the 2010 United States Census, the total New Hampshire population was 1,316,470 persons with 0.2 percent of the population reported as American Indian/Alaskan Native.<sup>3</sup> There are more than 565 federally recognized tribes throughout the United States but no tribe has been formally recognized in New Hampshire. While the indigenous people of New Hampshire include Abenaki and Penacook tribes, over 4,000 American Indian/Alaskan Native residents of the state reported tribal affiliations with federally recognized tribes in other states. Many of the neighboring states in New England do have recognized tribes.

### CURRENT STATUS AND DATA CONSIDERATIONS

Effective July 20, 2010, the New Hampshire legislature established The New Hampshire Commission on Native American Affairs. The purpose is to recognize the historical and cultural contributions of Native Americans to New Hampshire, to promote and strengthen their heritage, and to further address their needs through state policy and programs. The commission established various committees and had hoped to include a Social Services Committee that might be assigned work on Child Welfare issues but this suggestion was not adopted. The Commission is available to assist Native American groups, organizations, and individuals in New Hampshire with securing social services, education, employment opportunities, health care, housing, cultural opportunities, and census information as available at both the state and federal levels, including assistance in determining eligibility for the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, 25 U.S.C. section 1902 et seq.

The Foster Care Manager, whose duties include the State ICWA Management, has continued to work with the Commission as an important stakeholder in the development of ICWA related policies and procedures for the field. It is anticipated that the Commission will be open to reviewing and providing input for any further work and accompanying documentation around ICWA provisions.

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<sup>3</sup> Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2010. U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved May 15, 2014 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.census.gov/>



Over the years, the Division has maintained a relationship with the director of Wijokadoak, Incorporated<sup>4</sup>, a New Hampshire based non-profit social service organization advocating for individuals who are of Abenaki and other tribal descent. The director, who was also a key member of the Commission, made herself available to consult in the development of a training curriculum and specific materials and training goals regarding the Indian Child Welfare Act. As a result of this partnership, staff training on ICWA was incorporated into the Division for Children, Youth and Families' New Employee Core Training Curriculum for Cultural Competency. The director has since retired from the Commission and is unable to continue as a consultant to the Division for Children, Youth and Families. The Foster Care Manager is meeting with the current Chair of the Commission to ask for assistance in filling this important role.

In 2013, New Hampshire developed formal policy (Item 1510 (formally 704)) to reinforce the use of case-planning documents that are completed at the time of assessment to ensure the continued compliance with Indian Child Welfare Act related issues for children and families in contact with the Division. The policy outlines the steps a worker should take when a child is or maybe a member of a federally registered tribe. Last year, the Family Inquiry Tool, known as "FIT", which is used to assist in searching for relatives who might act as resources to a child and family was revised to include asking the relative if they had any Native American heritage.

At the present time, there is one child in care through Child Protective Services who is reported as American Indian/Alaskan Native and three additional children documented as multi-racial to include Native American. There are a total of five youth who are reported as American Indian/Native Alaskan that are documented in care as a result of involvement with Juvenile Justice Services.

## **Five year vision and Goals**

The Division for Children, Youth and Families plans to enhance the current policies by including a tracking procedure to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to ensure compliance with ICWA provisions.

The Family Inquiry Tool, used by Assessment and/or Family Services Staff, has been revised to remind workers to ask about tribal affiliation of any family members. Training to ensure an understanding of the importance of this searching will be offered to staff and incorporated in Core training.

Standardized form inquiry and notification letters will be developed to ensure that communication with Tribes and/or the Bureau of Indian Affairs follows all ICWA Protocols while protecting the confidentiality of the family's involvement with the Child Welfare System.

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<sup>4</sup> **Wijokadoak** means, "They help one another" in Abenaki. It is an organization formed by a group of concerned Native Americans and friends to serve the needs of indigenous People in New Hampshire within the ability of their resources. <http://www.wijokadoak.com>

The Division for Children, Youth and Families ICWA Manager will continue to participate in monthly conference calls with the State ICWA Managers. Through this participation the Division can connect with other states about Indian Child Welfare Act issues such as programs for monitoring compliance, training models that other states have developed, accepted documentation, and specific case related issues.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families, in collaboration with its contracted training providers, will review Core training to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and meaningful. The curriculum will be shared with the Commission on Native American Affairs for their review and input. Refresher training will be made available to staff at district offices on an as needed basis.

New Hampshire will continue to be diligent in its efforts to identify and verify the ethnicity of all children receiving Division for Children, Youth and Families Services and to follow the mandates of ICWA.

## Section 6: Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP)

### AGENCY ADMINISTERING CFCIP

The Adolescent Program is overseen and administered by the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) Adolescent Program Specialist. The Division is committed to best practice in meeting the needs of youth and will cooperate fully in any and all national evaluations of the effects of the programs in achieving the purposes of CFCIP. The Division for Children, Youth and Families is a State Administered Agency and access to CFCIP and Education and Training Vouchers funds is universally available across the State. Adolescent Workers with specialized training in adult living preparation, positive youth development and teen services are located in each district office. They provide case management for youth in out-of-home placement, consultation to other Child Protection staff working with this population and oversee the dissemination of CFCIP and ETV funds to qualified youth.

### Program Design and Delivery

#### MEETING THE EIGHT CFCIP PURPOSES:

Current and former youth in Division for Children, Youth and Families Out-of-Home Care from the ages of fourteen through twenty are served through the Division's Adolescent Program that ensures these youth obtain the preparation; resources and positive youth development they need to establish connections with caring adults and become healthy, self-sufficient and successful adults. Adolescent Workers provide case management for youth in out-of-home placement, consultation to other Child Protective Services staff working with this population and oversee the dissemination of CFCIP and ETV funds to qualified youth. In addition, the Division for Children, Youth and Families offers services to young adults as they leave out-of-home placement, including assistance with post-secondary expenses, housing expenses, and other self-sufficiency needs.

There are five main components of the Adolescent Program:

1. The Adult Living Preparation Process (required for youth fifteen to twenty in foster care);
2. New Hampshire TRAILS (required for youth sixteen through twenty in foster care and is currently being revamped to increase utilization by younger youth ages thirteen to fifteen);
3. Youth Advisory Board (serves youth ages fourteen to twenty in foster care and interested former youth in care from the age of eighteen and beyond);
4. Teen Conference (serves youth ages fourteen to twenty in foster care and interested former youth in care from the age of eighteen and beyond), and

5. Aftercare Services (serves former youth in care from eighteen through twenty-two including those youth who left foster care for adoption or guardianship at the age of sixteen. Aftercare Services includes the dissemination of ETV funds to eligible youth.

Additional services include:

- Youth Action Pool (serves youth ages fourteen to twenty in foster care and interested former youth in care from the age of eighteen and beyond);
- Public Achievement (serves residents of the Sununu Youth Services Center (SYSC) ages fourteen to seventeen);
- Tuition Waiver for Foster and Adopted Children Program (serves former youth in care ages eighteen through twenty-two), and
- Extended Care Services (serves former youth in care ages eighteen to twenty).

#### ADULT LIVING PREPARATION PROCESS (ALPP)

All youth in out-of-home placement through the Division for Children, Youth and Families between the ages of fourteen to twenty-one will participate in the Adult Living Preparation process described below. These individuals are considered “likely to remain in foster care.” There are two assessments utilized in these processes that are in bold.

While the goal for every child and youth involved with the Division for Children, Youth and Families is permanency, adult living preparation is equally important, especially for those youth in the Division’s care who will not be reunified with their parents, adopted or in relative guardianship prior to case closure. The Division’s Adult Living Preparation Process (ALPP) provides assistance to older youth in care by helping them transition to self-sufficiency. The process starts with youth at the age of fourteen who are in out-of-home placement. Adult Living Preparation Process plans are to be updated on a yearly basis.

Participating in the Adult Living Preparation Process along with the youth is their caregiver, their Division for Children, Youth and Families Worker and other significant adults in their life.

The first phase of the Adult Living Preparation Process begins with the **Needs Assessment**. The youth is interviewed about their strengths, challenges, interests, supports, and future goals. Following the Needs Assessment is the **Casey Life Skills Assessment**, which identifies the youth’s skills and abilities in the following domains: Daily Living, Self-Care, Relationships and Communication, Housing and Money Management, Work and Study and Career and Education Planning.

The third step in the process is the **Adult Living Plan**. For each domain area indicated by the Skills Assessment, the Adult Living Plan identifies the specific transition plan for the youth. In addition, whatever action steps need to be taken by the primary caregiver, the Child Protective Service Worker/Juvenile Probation and Parole Officer or the youth as part of the youth’s preparation process are indicated along with timeframes for completion. For example, if the youth is lacking connections outside of the professionals in the case, the Adult Living Plan could

recommend that the foster parent connect them to a community youth group within thirty days. Also determined at this time is whether the youth needs any financial assistance in order to achieve their adult living plan goals.

During the Adult Living Preparation Process youth are provided with information on housing, employment, education and other resources needed for them to achieve their goals. Starting this year, residential facilities are also required to administer a Career Assessment as part of this process. The assessment which is done through the Choices Planner module in [Bridges.com](http://Bridges.com) provides the youth the opportunity to answer questions about different interests and based on their responses lists careers that match their interests. This information including next steps such as helping the youth to gather more information about each career is included in the Adult Living Plan. This assessment is also available to youth in foster and relative homes.

The Needs Assessment, Skills Assessment and Adult Living Plan are completed within sixty days of the youth's eligibility. The Skills Assessment is redone every six months to track the youth's progress. The Adult Living Plan is updated each year to reflect progress and changes as they occur.

The last component in the Adult Living Preparation Process is the **Post Care Plan** that is done within thirty days of the youth turning eighteen years old. The Post Care Plan is an opportunity for the youth to develop an anticipated budget based on where they plan to live after exiting care. Also included in the Post Care Plan are any and all supports and services the youth currently has and will need after exiting care.

For youth who have a special education coding, the Adolescent Worker sends a letter to the sending school district. The letter invites the school to join with them to develop the federally mandated "Transition Plan" outlined by Public Law 101-476. The law mandates that students with disabilities have a "Transition Plan" at age sixteen.

Division Youth who are seventeen and three quarter's years of age have a "90 Day Youth Transition Meeting". The meeting identifies and plans for the transition needs of youth and occurs ninety days prior to the youth's eighteenth birthday and in cases of extended jurisdiction, again ninety days prior to the youth's final exit from state care.

The youth is provided the opportunity to have input regarding the "90 Day Youth Transition Meeting" including individuals they would like to invite as well as the time date, and location of the meeting. During the meeting the Child Protective Service Worker assists the youth with the creation of a "90 Day Youth Transition Plan." This document details the specific assistance and support available to the youth during and after their transition. Specific options for housing, health insurance, and education, local opportunities for mentors and continuing support services, work force supports and employment services are indicated and are as detailed as the youth may elect. The plan is updated prior to the youth's exit from care if circumstances change.

The culmination of the "90 Day Youth Transition Meeting" process is for each youth to be provided with a packet containing all of their educational and medical information, along with contact information for the identified individuals in their post care support network and their mental and dental health providers.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families Adolescent Workers attend the meetings whenever possible. They are responsible for ensuring that the meetings occur for all the youth in their district office.

#### NEW HAMPSHIRE TRAILS (TEEN RESPONSIBILITY AND INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS)

Once the youth has reviewed and signed their Adult Living Plan, their primary caregiver may start the “New Hampshire TRAILS” life skills curriculum. New Hampshire TRAILS was created in 2001/2002 by a collaboration that included Granite State College and a group of youth workers and youth from across New Hampshire. It empowers caregivers who receive training on its use by Granite State College, to prepare youth for the transition out of state care and into adulthood. New Hampshire Trails is divided into three sections:

1. Personal and Social Growth;
2. Education; and
3. Career Development and Daily Living Skills.

New Hampshire Trails is an effective way for youth to learn the skills they need as identified by their Skills Assessment and indicated in their Adult Living Plan. As noted previously, the New Hampshire Trails curriculum is currently being revamped. This process will include among other changes: the huge role of the Internet and cell phones, the role of social media in the lives of youth and new resources to teach adult living skills such as YouTube and TEDTALKS. It is expected that the revised version of New Hampshire Trails will be ready for roll-out by the fall of 2015, if not sooner.

#### YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD

Please refer to the [New Hampshire Youth Voices](#) in Section Two “Agency Responsiveness to the Community” for further description.

#### YOUTH ACTION POOL

Please refer to the [Youth Action Pool](#) in Section Two “Agency Responsiveness to the Community” for further description.

#### PUBLIC ACHIEVEMENT

Public Achievement, which is led by undergraduate students from St. Anselm College who act as coaches, is a youth civic engagement initiative focused on the most basic concepts of citizenship, democracy, and public work. Public Achievement draws on the talents and desires of youth to build a better world and create a different kind of politics. Public Achievement began in October of 2014 at Sununu Youth Services Center. Six youth participated and selected improving the educational program at the facility as their goal. They shared their experiences, did research and consulted with staff and educational professionals to develop a list of concerns and recommendations. The youth wrote a letter to the facility operations director and school principal and later met with them to fully discuss the issue. As a result of their advocacy efforts,



changes have been made within the school program and a discussion about implementing their recommendations is ongoing.

Beginning in February of 2015 six new youth participants selected increasing the opportunities for off campus trips as their area of focus. These youth followed a similar process as the first group and also had the opportunity to present their findings and recommendations to faculty members at St. Anselm's College. As a result of the youth's advocacy efforts changes have already been made to expedite the process for scheduling off campus activities and the facility operations director is committed to increasing these opportunities. In addition, the operations director has asked the youth for assistance in gathering youth input in other areas related to increasing the effectiveness of the Sununu Youth Services Center program.

### ANNUAL TEEN CONFERENCE

Each year the Adolescent Program and New Hampshire Youth Voices host a conference for teens in out-of-home placement. Approximately 115 youth and 110 staff participate in the yearly event that takes place on a college campus. The youth determine the workshops through a survey and topics usually include the safe use of technology, finding an apartment, managing your money, healthy relationships, renting an apartment, self-advocacy, getting a two-year degree, getting a job, and the college admissions and application process. In recent year's members of the New Hampshire Youth Voices along with numerous alumni have stepped up as leaders of the conference. This year will mark the eleventh Division for Children, Youth and Families Teen Conference.

### Division for Children, Youth and Families Aftercare Services

A voluntary program that provides continued case management, future planning, and limited financial assistance including **room and board** to former youth in care pursuing educational, employment, housing, and other goals. Young adults receiving Division for Children, Youth and Families Aftercare Services may receive Chafee and/or ETV funds depending on their eligibility status.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families has an established system to ensure that any and all youth that may be eligible for Aftercare Services at various points during their Child Protective or Juvenile Justice Services involvement. Youth are informed about this program during the Adult Living Preparation process that starts at age fourteen. The Division for Children, Youth and Families provides them with an overview of the program including a brochure. The youth are again reminded about Aftercare Services at their 90-Day Youth Transition meeting. Information about the program is also included in the Young Adult Resource guide, the New Hampshire Youth Voices Facebook page and the Division for Children, Youth and Families Adolescent Program webpage. Foster and Adoptive parents are informed about these services through announcements in the Connector newsletter that is sent out quarterly to over 600 foster and adoptive parents.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families has also informed the residential facilities and CASA through regular emails and presentations to New Hampshire High School Guidance

Counselors at various trainings and conferences in partnership with the New Hampshire Higher Education and Assistance Foundation (NHHEAF).

#### **TUITION WAIVER FOR FOSTER AND ADOPTED CHILDREN PROGRAM**

The Tuition Waiver for Foster and Adopted Children Program has greatly enhanced the ability of youth in care of going on to college. The program provides up to twenty tuition and fee waivers per year to New Hampshire State Schools for youth formerly in out-of-home placement through the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families. Additional information on this program can be found in the [Education and Training Voucher Program](#) section featured later in this report.

#### **EXTENDED CARE SERVICES**

Some youth who exit foster care are overwhelmed with the challenges of transitioning to adulthood and have not established the permanent connections to adults they need for ongoing support. For these individuals the limited assistance they can receive through the Division for Children, Youth and Families Aftercare Services is not sufficient and they need more intensive assistance sometimes including temporary placement. To better support youth in that predicament the Division created Extended Care Services. Extended Care Services provides support to former youth in care until the age of twenty-one and sometimes beyond by partnering with them to stabilize their lives and by searching with them for a permanent caring adult. In addition to temporary placement, youth in Extended Care Services receive case management, referrals to other agencies, and assistance in finding a permanent caring adult and limited mental health or other appropriate therapeutic services. Once they are in a more stable situation these youth will have the option of being transitioned from Extended Care to Aftercare Services.

### **Eligibility for Benefits and Services**

The Division for Children, Youth and Families is a State Administered Agency and access to CFCIP and ETV funds is universally available across the state. The eligibility for CFCIP funds for youth in care is as follows:

#### **Current Youth in care:**

Youth in Division for Children, Youth and Families placement (including Sununu Youth Services Center youth after they have left secure detention) ages fourteen through twenty.

#### **Former Youth in care:**

**ETV funds:** Young adults age eighteen through twenty\* who:

- **Had a previously open Division for Children, Youth and Families Child Protective Case and left Division for Children, Youth and Families Placement on or after their eighteenth birthday (Includes youth who aged out of Sununu Youth Services Center).**

- Had a previously open Division for Children, Youth and Families Juvenile Justice Case and left Division for Children, Youth and Families Foster, Relative, Shelter or Residential Care on or after their seventeenth birthday.
- **After attaining sixteen years of age left Division for Children, Youth and Families Child Protective Placement or Juvenile Justice foster, relative, shelter or residential care for guardianship or adoption.**

**Chafee funds:** Young adults in the **bold** type above.

- \* Young adults enrolled in college or a career training school and making satisfactory academic progress at the time of their twenty-first birthday may continue to receive Education and Training Voucher funds until they turn twenty-three years of age.

#### OPPORTUNITIES FOR “AGE OR DEVELOPMENTALLY-APPROPRIATE” ACTIVITIES

The New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families has made the need for normalcy for youth in foster care a priority. A few examples include being the first New England State to create a statewide normalcy survey for youth in residential care, being instrumental in the starting of a normalcy subcommittee with the New England Youth Coalition (NEYC) and working with Granite State College to create normalcy training for foster parents and residential staff.

The Youth Advisory Board has conducted many panels focused on providing normal experiences for youth in care. Questions from the normalcy survey have been integrated into the every two year site review process that all the residential facilities in New Hampshire must undergo in order to care for the Division’s youth. The site review findings are discussed with the residential facilities in a closing meeting; recommendations for advancing normalcy practices are made at that meeting and included in a final report.

The New Hampshire Residential Provider Community has embraced the normalcy concept as well. More youth in placement are playing sports or working than ever before. Many of the facilities have their own social events while others make sure that residents are able to attend events at their school or in their community. Even youth at the Sununu Youth Services Center have had the opportunity to participate in a dance and an old-fashioned Christmas celebration in recent years. The majority of programs have moved away from the traditional points and level system to a more individualized approach.

The New Hampshire DCYF Youth in Care Bill of Rights contains a specific section focused on normalcy and that part is below:

- To be able to participate in “normal” activities consistent with your age and developmental level, unless restricted by your treatment plan or case plan; and
- To advocate to appropriately use technology; such as social networking sites and cell phones, based on your level of maturity and responsibility and taking into account the

environment in which you are living, the support of your treatment team and your ability to maintain privileges.

## **Division for Children, Youth and Families Adolescent Program Goals and Objectives for Year One**

### **GOAL A. ENSURE THAT ALL YOUTH IN CARE LEARN, PRACTICE AND REFINE THE SKILLS NEEDED FOR ADULTHOOD**

**Objective 1.** In collaboration with the Division for Children, Youth and Families New Hampshire Teen Voices Advisory Board the current adult living preparation process and related policies will be reviewed and updated as necessary. (Year 1)

A subcommittee of Adolescent Workers has been working on an evaluation of the current Adult Living Preparation process. This has included getting input from the Youth Advisory Board and reviewing materials from four other states. The subcommittee will be making their recommendations for changes to the process at a larger meeting in July of 2015. These recommendations will then be presented to the Youth Advisory Board, along with representatives from residential facilities and foster care.

**Objective 2.** Make the Casey Life Skills Assessment (CLSA) the assessment used in the Adult Living Preparation process. (Year 1)

**Completed.** The CLSA is now used to assess adult living skills for foster and relative homes. The majority of residential programs have also started using the CLSA and there is an ongoing effort to work with the other facilities to get them trained and ready to use the CLSA.

**Objective 3.** Update the current adult living skills curriculum (New Hampshire Trails) to include managing technology and social networking and to make it significantly more “hands on”. (Year 1)

This process is still ongoing. Granite State College has been working on the revamp of the New Hampshire Trails curriculum since last summer. It is expected that the new version will be ready for use by this fall.

**Objective 4.** Update the trainer’s guide for the current adult living skills curriculum (New Hampshire Trails) to make it applicable for younger youth age thirteen to fifteen years old. (Year 1)

**Ongoing-**see above.

**GOAL C. YOUTH IN CARE WILL UNDERSTAND THEIR RIGHTS AND BE AWARE OF THE ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO THEM THROUGH THE DIVISION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES ADOLESCENT PROGRAM**

- Objective 1.** Complete the New Hampshire Youth in Care Bill of Rights policy and ensure the document is provided to all youth in care who are age appropriate. (Year 1).

This is still ongoing. The New Hampshire Youth in Care Bill of Rights has been completed including additional rights in order to comply with Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (H.R. 4980). The Division's Policy Unit is currently preparing the policy for submission to the Administration for final approval.

- Objective 2.** Collaborate with the Youth Advisory Board to create a way to provide information to youth entering foster care about the Division and the resources and opportunities available to them through the Adolescent Program. (Year 1).

The plan is for this information to be included with the Bill of Rights so once that is ready for distribution this information will also be distributed.

- Objective 3.** Adolescent Workers will attend local foster parent association meetings and the Adolescent Program will provide regular updates to the foster and adoptive parent newsletter in order to update foster parents on the support, resources and opportunities available through the Division's Adolescent Program. (Ongoing)

This continues to occur on an ongoing basis.

**GOAL E. CREATE INCREASED ACCESS TO HOUSING OPTIONS FOR APPLA AND OTHER DIVISION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES YOUTH IN NEED**

- Objective 1.** Continue collaborating with the Homeless Teen Task Force to leverage federal and state resources to aid homeless youth. (Ongoing)

The Division for Children, Youth and Families continues to have representation on this committee.

- Objective 2.** Strengthen the Division's connection with existing Transitional Living Programs and the Bureau of Homeless and Housing by meeting with the programs annually (Ongoing).

The Division for Children, Youth and Families continues to maintain regular electronic communication with these agencies.

- Objective 3.** Develop a separate section on housing options on the Adolescent Program website and the New Hampshire Teen Voices Facebook page. (Year 1).

**Completed.** Information on housing options and homeless support resources are available on the Adolescent Program website and New Hampshire Youth Voices Facebook page.

**GOAL F. PROVIDE PERSONAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT TO YOUTH AGING OUT OF FOSTER CARE THROUGH MENTORS AND THE PROMOTION OF INTERACTIONS WITH DEDICATED ADULTS**

**Objective 1.** Collaborate with Leadership New Hampshire to develop a mentor program for youth involved with the Division. (Year 1).

**Completed.** The Division for Children, Youth and Families has assisted Leadership New Hampshire in creating program guidelines including a screening process to ensure mentee safety. A representative from Leadership New Hampshire and the Adolescent Program Specialist were scheduled to meet on June 4, 2015 to discuss the next steps in getting the program started so that former youth in care can be matched with a mentor.

**GOAL H. THE EXPERIENCE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES OF FORMER YOUTH WILL BE UTILIZED TO POSITIVELY IMPACT BOTH CURRENT YOUTH IN CARE AND DIVISION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES PRACTICE WITH ADOLESCENTS**

**Objective 1.** The University of New Hampshire, Center for Professional Excellence shall take over management of the Youth Action Pool and provide members with the knowledge, skills and abilities to conduct presentations for staff and stakeholders focused on improving adolescent practice. (Year 1)

**Completed.** Please see page for the latest update on the Youth Action Pool.

**Objective 2.** Explore a partnership with another institution or agency to enhance the facilitation of the New Hampshire Youth Voices Advisory Board. (Ongoing)

This continues to occur.

**GOAL I. ENSURE THAT AGING OUT YOUTH ARE READY TO TRANSITION FROM CARE BACK INTO THEIR HOME COMMUNITY**

**Objective 1.** Change the 90 Day Youth Transition Meeting Checklist to require that all youth leave care with their social security card, an original birth certificate and a non-driver ID. (Year 1).

**Completed.** The Division for Children, Youth and Families Adolescent Program has submitted these changes to the Division for Children, Youth and Families Policy Unit that is working to implement them.

**Objective 2.** Change the 90 Day Youth Transition Meeting Checklist to include an explanation of the newly expanded New Hampshire Medicaid health insurance option for youth aging out of care. (Year 1).



**Completed.** The Division for Children, Youth and Families Adolescent Program has requested that the checklist include the program and the eligibility requirements and that the Division for Children, Youth and Families Caseworker work with the Fiscal Specialist to further explain the program to the youth. The Division for Children, Youth and Families Policy Unit is working to implement this change.

**GOAL J. PROVIDE FINANCIAL, HOUSING, COUNSELING, EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND OTHER APPROPRIATE SUPPORT AND SERVICES TO FORMER FOSTER CARE RECIPIENTS BETWEEN EIGHTEEN AND TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF AGE TO COMPLEMENT THEIR OWN EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND TO ASSURE THAT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS RECOGNIZE AND ACCEPT THEIR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PREPARING FOR AND MAKING THE TRANSITION INTO ADULTHOOD.**

**Objective 1.** Continue to ensure that all eligible youth are informed about the Division for Children, Youth and Families Aftercare Services prior to exiting care. (Ongoing).

This continues to occur. See previous section on the [Division for Children, Youth and Families Aftercare Services](#).

**Objective 2.** Continue to provide Division for Children, Youth and Families Aftercare Services to all participating youth. (Ongoing).

This continues to occur. See previous section on the Division for Children, Youth and Families Aftercare Services.

**Objective 3.** Continue to utilize any and all search and connection tools including website, social networking sites, newsletter, adult living training opportunities to connect youth in need with the Division for Children, Youth and Families Aftercare Services. (Ongoing).

This continues to occur. See previous section on the Division for Children, Youth and Families Aftercare Services.

**GOAL K. INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF FORMER YOUTH IN CARE THAT PARTICIPATE AND COMPLETE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

**Objective 1.** The Division for Children, Youth and Families will continue to ensure that all eligible youth are informed about the Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) that are available through Aftercare Services as well as the Tuition Waiver for Foster and Adopted Children Program prior to exiting care. (Ongoing).

This continues to occur. See later section on the [Education and Training Voucher Program](#).

**Objective 2.** The Division for Children, Youth and Families will continue to work in partnership with the New Hampshire Education Assistance Foundation (NHHEAF) to provide ongoing training and support for youth, staff and

caregivers regarding the college selection, admissions and financial aid process. (Ongoing).

This continues to occur. See later section on [Collaboration with other Private and Public Agencies](#).

**GOAL L. DIVISION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES STAFF AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH YOUTH IN CARE WILL RECEIVE SPECIALIZED TRAINING FOCUSED ON THE LATEST AND MOST EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR WORKING WITH THIS POPULATION**

**GOAL M. THE DIVISION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES ADOLESCENT PROGRAM WILL INCREASE THE USE OF DATA TO IMPROVE ADOLESCENT PRACTICE**

**Objective 1.** To utilize NYTD data from both the served and surveyed populations to ensure equality of access to independent living skills across the state and best practice in the areas of education, employment, housing and well-being. (Year 1).

This is an ongoing process. The Division for Children, Youth and Families Adolescent Program has continued to work with a professor from the University of New Hampshire to analyze outcomes information from the surveyed population. A final report is being prepared that will be presented at the Division for Children, Youth and Families Youth Advisory Board on June 17<sup>th</sup> of this year in order to inform this stakeholder group of youth, Division for Children, Youth and Families Staff and residential facility staff and gather input to improve practice.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families continues to run monthly queries detailing all youth that receive a NYTD service. This program specialist has had ongoing discussions with representatives from the Division for Children, Youth and Families Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement to analyze this information to ensure equal access across the state. This has included working with a Division for Children, Youth and Families Field Administrator to ensure that all the Juvenile Justice Offices are entering the NYTD data so that a proper analysis can be made.

**Objective 2.** To gather and analyze data from the two current APPLA Workers related to permanency, connections to caring adults, adult living preparation and post care housing options to measure their impact and explore possible expansion of these positions. (Year 1).

**Completed.** There is now only one APPLA Worker. This worker is following the impact of their involvement on the cases they are working with. This includes tracking key permanency factors such as Legal Permanency, Family Connections and a Place to Live, as well as others. This information will continue to be used to evaluate this position's impact on permanency and possible expansion of this position.

**Objective 3.** To establish an exit survey to be administered to youth who age out of care and to use data collected to target the Adolescent Program and other Division resources. (Year 1).

An exit survey has been developed and will be piloted in the north country district offices. Work is being completed with the Adolescent Worker that covers that region to implement this practice. Youth input will be utilized to improve both the survey and the survey process.

## **Planned Activities for FY 2016**

The Division for Children, Youth and Families Adolescent Program will continue to offer all of the services indicated in the above mentioned [Program and Delivery](#) section. It is expected with the age of majority for Juvenile Justice Youth being raised to eighteen years of age effective July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015 that many more Juvenile Justice Youth will receive services to assist them with their transition out of care and into adulthood. The Division's Adolescent Program has already conducted a presentation to Juvenile Justice Supervisors on available resources to youth approaching eighteen and beyond. The Adolescent Workers are reaching out to Juvenile Justice Staff in their local offices to further present this information as needed.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families is currently planning ways to integrate the prudent parent standard into the residential and foster parent trainings and practice. The Youth Advisory Board and the Youth Action Pool will be involved in that effort by providing examples of normal and age appropriate activities, and as needed provide consultation on curriculums and participate in trainings.

The Adolescent Program will utilize Chafee funds to host a dance/social event for youth in care in 2016.

## **National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)**

As mentioned in an earlier section for the past year and a half the Division for Children, Youth and Families has been sharing NYTD data with a professor from the University of New Hampshire. The purpose is to analyze the Division's NYTD data in an effort to learn from it and use it to strengthen the Division's adolescent practices. On June 17<sup>th</sup> a report on the outcomes information gathered from the initial cohort will be presented to the [Youth Advisory Board](#) for their reaction and recommendations.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families continues to run monthly queries detailing all youth that receive a NYTD service. There have been ongoing discussions with representatives from the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement to analyze this information to ensure equal access across the state. This has included working with a field administrator to ensure that all the Juvenile Justice Offices are entering the NYTD data so that a proper analysis can be made.

Since the inception of NYTD the Division has worked to improve data collection. This has included training new staff and ongoing training for existing staff, as needed, regarding

recording independent living services for the served population and surveys for the baseline and follow-up populations. The Adolescent Program Specialist has provided refresher trainings to Division Supervisors in advance of each survey period for the follow-up populations. The Adolescent Workers have followed this up with presentations to staff in their district offices. The Division has employed several successful strategies to maximize data collection from youth that have left care. This has included maintaining monthly contact with these youth and providing various incentives such as gift cards and entrance into a drawing for a laptop.

## **Collaboration with Other Private and Public Agencies**

The Division for Children, Youth and Families has an ongoing partnership with the New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation (NHHEAF) in order to support youth going onto college or to a career training school. NHHEAF is a statewide agency devoted to helping parents and their aspiring college students navigate the college selection, admissions and financial aid process. This has included the following on a yearly basis:

- **File-A-FAFSA nights:** Youth and caregivers received personalized instruction and guidance enabling them to successfully complete their FAFSA while at the training. This also included completing Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) and Tuition Waiver applications when applicable.
- **College Overview Presentations:** Overview of the college selection, admissions and financial aid process including the ETV program and the Tuition Waiver for Foster and Adopted Children program for youth and caregivers. These presentations have also occurred regularly at the Sununu Youth Services Center (SYSC).
- **Individual Meetings:** Current and former youth in care are connected with a NHHEAF college counselor to get individualized attention regarding their college plans. This includes regular meetings with youth at Sununu Youth Services Center.
- **iamcollegebound.org**-An interactive website through which youth can earn prizes while learning about college resources.
- **Division for Children, Youth and Families Teen Conference:** In August of 2014, New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation conducted two workshops at the Division for Children, Youth and Families Teen Conference focused on the college selection, admissions and financial aid process.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families has continued to be an active participant of the New Hampshire Teen Task Force, a group of federal and local partners that includes representatives from the Homeless Liaisons, the Child and Family Services Transitional Living Program, the New Hampshire Department of Education and other stakeholders. The task force's mission is to "End youth homelessness by promoting safety, well-being, permanency, life-long connections and self-sufficiency". The group continues to work on aligning local and state resources to support homeless youth.

The Division has participated in the New Hampshire Homeless Higher Education Task Force the aim of which is to break down the barriers homeless youth, including former youth in care, face when attending college.

The Division has partnered with Leadership New Hampshire to help them develop a mentoring program that will connect members of their organization with former youth in care with similar interests. It is expected that the program will start matching mentors with mentees by the fall of this year.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families has initiated a partnership with Wildcat Youth Mentors (WYM) a non-profit organization that provides school-based mentoring to youth ages eleven to fifteen attending schools in the New Hampshire Seacoast area. Division for Children, Youth and Families Child Protective Service Workers in the Rochester and Seacoast Offices will be educating parents on the program during assessments and initiating referrals in open Family Service Cases. WYM is seeking Division assistance in supporting their application for grant funding to expand the program to other parts of the state.

The Division has partnered with St. Anselm's College for the facilitation of the aforementioned Public Achievement Program at Sununu Youth Services Center.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families has partnered with Goodwill Industries to provide youth at Sununu Youth Services Center with assistance writing resumes and applying for jobs.

## **Human Trafficking**

### **POLICY UPDATE**

On September 29, 2014, President Obama signed into law P.L. 113-183, the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act. The law amended both Title IV-B and Title IV-E requirements. Some of the law's provisions were effective on September 29, 2014, while other provisions have an effective date of September 29, 2015 or later.

In response to this, the Division amended its Title IV-E Plan for the provisions related to relative notifications and the definition of a sibling. On January 20, 2015, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) received New Hampshire's amendments to its Title IV-E Plan. On March 24, 2015, the Division received a letter from ACF stating that the amendments made to the Title IV-E Plan have been approved.

### **COLLABORATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND FUTURE POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The Division for Children, Youth and Families is collaborating in a multidisciplinary effort to meet the expected Program Instructions that will be forthcoming for the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (PL 113-183). Utilizing the Information Memorandum ACYF-CB-IM-14-03, the Division has identified needs for revisions to policies, administrative rules, and multidisciplinary publications. The New Hampshire Attorney General's Office, the Judicial Branch's Court Improvement Staff, and stakeholder programs have been instrumental in initiating changes to protocols used amongst the New Hampshire agencies to

affect some of the systemic changes. Among these systemic changes, a guidebook has been developed to facilitate the statewide response to combat human trafficking by law enforcement agencies, the Division for Children, Youth and Families, community victim assistance organizations, and other key stakeholders in New Hampshire communities. In addition, the Court Improvement Protocols have been updated in support of reviewing permanency planning and training on the revised protocols and will be delivered this fall. The Division has implemented changes in training curriculums and completed updates to two administrative rules with the Joint Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules. Ongoing efforts to finalize the changes in policy will continue in anticipation of the next program instruction and will be in place by September 29, 2015.

### TRAINING UPDATE

On May 1, 2014, the Division attended a Human Trafficking Forum with Traffick 911 guest speaker Deena Graves at the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority. Deena Graves founded Traffick911 in 2009 to free American children from sexual slavery. Under her leadership, Traffick911 has fed law enforcement leads that has resulted in multiple felony arrests, pleas and convictions; has identified or rescued close to 140 victims; and opened Triumph House, one of a handful of safe houses for these children in the United States; and won multiple awards, including the Executive Associate Director Award from Homeland Security in Washington, DC. She speaks nationally on the subject of domestic minor sex trafficking.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families in partnership with the Dartmouth Trauma Interventions and Research Center and the Center for Professional Excellence in Child Welfare facilitated a two day Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking Symposium presented by Deena Graves. On November 13, 2014, the first day of the Symposium was held at Sununu Youth Services Center and was attended by fifty Division Staff. On November 14, 2014, the second day was held at the Capitol Center for the Arts in Concord, New Hampshire and was attended by over 500 participants that included Division staff, law enforcement, attorneys, lawmakers, mental health professionals, medical professionals, teachers, guidance counselors and other stakeholders. The Symposium provided a powerful and informative message to front line workers about the heinous crime of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking that is taking place in New Hampshire. Ms. Graves also had the opportunity to present to the youth at Sununu Youth Services Center the interactive *Traps of a Trafficker* which equips youth to avoid the tricks, traps and lures of traffickers. This presentation led to two female residents making disclosures of being victims of human trafficking. The presentation was extremely thought provoking for all. Many of the male residents were thankful for the presentation and stated that they planned on calling their sisters to warn them of the dangers of trafficking.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families received approval for use of Title I funds to bring Deena back in order to write train the trainer curriculum for New Hampshire *Traps of a Trafficker* for use to train staff who could teach the curriculum to at-risk youth involved with the Division. The Division has also requested funding to have her write a train-the-trainer curriculum for Division Staff on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking. This training will also be utilized with residential placement providers, foster parents and homeless education liaisons.

The learning objectives for the two trainings are as follows:



### ***Traffick911 Traps of a Trafficker youth and parent program***

Traffick911's interactive *Traps of a Trafficker* equips youth and parents to avoid the tricks, traps and lures of traffickers. Traffick911 speaks to youth in schools, Boys and Girls Clubs, juvenile detention, youth groups and other venues. The program is adapted to the age group and also is presented to PTAs and other parent groups.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

1. **Expose the trap.** Recruiters are setting traps for American children that have just the right bait to lure them into their clutches. Some traps are more obvious than others. This program teaches children and teens how they are out to trick, trap and lure them.
2. **Reveal the bad decisions.** Youth think they are invincible. Age-appropriate case studies illustrate how one bad decision has forever changed the lives of real children and teens just like them.
3. **Show their hangouts.** Recruiters and traffickers hang out where children do – on the Internet, on their cell phones, in malls, walking the hallways of schools, etc. The Traps takes away their hiding places by teaching youth how and where they are hiding out right where they are hanging out.
4. **Teach them how to stay invincible.** Equip youth with tools to stay safe – what to NEVER to and what to ALWAYS do.
5. **Spur them to action.** Help youth develop an understanding of the red flags of a friend who is being trafficked and help them realize they can help fight this crime.

### ***Traffick911 6-hour DMST training and results***

#### **Learning Objectives:**

1. **Define the scope.** Introduce attendees to the scope of domestic minor sex trafficking in the United States, the state and the local area, as well as the laws and work to combat this crime.
2. **Uncover the vulnerabilities.** Build knowledge of the key vulnerabilities of at-risk groups, such as runaways, youth with truancy violations, homeless children, etc., while realizing any child can become a victim.
3. **Recognize the dynamics.** Understand the drivers, including buyer demand, pimp manipulation and control, abuse within the home, and cultural facilitators.
4. **Rescue victims.** Know the red flags to look for in a victim, including physical and psychological signs of involvement, and learn strength-based and trauma-informed methods of asking questions to identify victims.
5. **Pinpoint needed changes and strategies.** Begin the discussion of needed changes to current policies and procedures.

### **Training Agenda:**

- Global trafficking
- What is domestic minor sex trafficking: national, state, and local
- Scope of DMST
- Where does the state stand: laws and history
- Who are the victims
- Identification and professional intervention
- Recruitment and control
- Demand drives the machine
- Unique needs
- Societal influence

The Division is in the process of coordinating a statewide coalition with the initial meeting to be held on June 18, 2015, inviting various agencies to talk about developing a steering committee. Invited to this meeting are partners from the Attorney General's office, community outreach organizations, faith-based organizations, Governor's Council on Substance Abuse, service providers, New Hampshire Coalition against Sexual and Domestic Violence, US Attorney's Office, a representative from the State Legislature, Homeland Security, Child Advocacy Centers and the Department of Education.

Information is being reviewed and analyzed to determine what changes need to be made to the Bridges system in order to track and report victims and survivors that are involved with New Hampshire's Child Welfare System.

To raise awareness among youth in care about Human Trafficking and what to look out for, the Division is working with Granite State College to include a section on it in the revamped New Hampshire Trails independent living skills curriculum. This curriculum will be offered to all youth in the Division's care who are between fourteen and twenty-one years of age.

Here is a list of priorities that the Division needs to focus on as a state:

- Training for all staff, CASA, providers
- Prevention and education: prepare vulnerable groups of youth to better protect themselves from potential traffickers and to identify risky situations
- Education for boys on media, not to see girls as objects

- Support identification and response to child victims of trafficking
- Develop a way of collecting data
- Develop a multidisciplinary case staffing and referrals when youth have been trafficked (discussed utilizing a model similar to CAC)
- Develop placement, treatment options for child victims of human trafficking (trauma-informed, evidence-based)
- Implement a "Safe Home"

## CFCIP Training

Training conducted in SFY 2015 and planned for SFY 2016

In support of the goals and objectives of the CFCIP and to help foster parents, relative guardians, adoptive parents, group home staff, and case managers understand and address issues confronting adolescents preparing for independent living:

- **Adult Living Preparation:** On August 7, 2014 at the Division for Children, Youth and Families Teen Conference, there were six different workshops offered to current youth in care. Workshop topics included Dangerous Relationships; Strategic Sharing; Getting a Financial Life; Knowing Who I Am and Where I Am Going; Getting Solid-A Young Person's Guide to Permanency and Get Educated About Going to College. In addition to the workshops there was a large scale life simulation game called Independence City designed to teach participants independent living skills. **Will be provided in SFY 2016.**
- **Human Trafficking:** On November 13th and 14<sup>th</sup> of 2014 Deena Graves, ABC, Founder and Executive Director of Traffick911 conducted two separate six hour trainings for staff and providers on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking and ways to combat the issue. **Additional trainings on Human Trafficking will be provided in SFY 2016.**
- **Casey Life Skills:** On January 28, 2015 the Adolescent Program Specialist and the Adolescent Worker from the Rochester District Office trained the Adolescent Workers and their supervisors along with several Juvenile Justice Staff on how to use the Casey Life Skills assessment. On May 7, 2015 the Adolescent Program Specialist provided the same training to approximately fifteen residential treatment providers. **Will be provided as needed in SFY 2016.**
- **The Adolescent Tool Box:** This training for newly hired staff was provided on February 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> in 2015. The training provides an overview of the challenges facing youth who age out of care, the importance of permanency, establishing a relationship with youth and an overview of the Division's Adolescent Program and available resources. Former youth in care frequently participate as co-trainers. The youth explain to the new staff how to establish a youth's trust, how to motivate them and how to use a positive

youth development approach. In addition they provide suggestions on how to connect and plan with teens despite resistance. **Will be provided in SFY 2016.**

- **NYTD:** Overview of NYTD including purpose and requirements for both the served, baseline and follow-up populations. Provided to newly hired Juvenile Justice and Sununu Youth Services Center Staff. **Will be provided in SFY 2016.**
- **NYTD:** Refresher trainings on follow-up population requirements. Provided to supervisors on September 23, 2014. **Will be provided in SFY 2016 as needed.**
- **Strategic Sharing:** Occurred on April 29, 2015. Nine youth were taught how to share their life experiences in a manner that was safe, comfortable and had the most impact on the Division's Adolescent Practice. **Will be provided in SFY 2016.**
- **Vocational Rehabilitation:** On May 27, 2015 New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation provided training on how to access their services to the Adolescent Workers and their supervisors along with several Juvenile Justice Staff.
- **Going to College:** All trainings conducted by NHHEAF and offered to district offices. **(Will also be offered in SFY 2016).**
  - **File-A-FAFSA nights:** Provided at the Manchester District Office. Youth attendees received personalized instruction and guidance enabling them to successfully complete their FAFSA while at the training.
  - **College Overview Presentation:** Provided at the Claremont District Office. Reviewed the college selection, admissions and financial aid process for youth and their caregivers. Also offered at Sununu Youth Services Center.
- **Granite State College (GSC):** GSC is contracted through the Staff Development Partnership to provide training to foster parents, adoptive parents, group home and Division staff and is supported by training funds provided under the Title IV-E Foster Care Adoption and Assistance program. GSC conducted numerous trainings for caregivers and staff working with adolescents. The primary training regarding adult living preparation is the aforementioned New Hampshire Trails program. The New Hampshire Trails training is a twelve-hour course that will be offered on a regular basis throughout the state. Attending each New Hampshire Trails class is a combination of foster parents, residential and DCYF staff. GSC will continue to provide other specialized trainings that focus on work with adolescents in care. They are offered on an as needed basis and include:
  - **Embracing Normalcy** is a six-hour class that examines normalcy for youth in out-of-home care. Participants are exposed to innovative ways of thinking and explore ways to think creatively when providing normalcy. Participants will also learn about current technology and how to help kids in their care navigate the cyber world.

- **Youth Safety in the Age of Technology** is a twelve-hour class that provides the knowledge and skills needed to protect children, youth, and adults from online risks when using the Internet. Participants learn how to safely access the web by using common Internet tools such as browsers, email and instant messaging.
- **Transitions in Adolescent Development** is a six-hour class that explores theories of adolescent development within the domains of emotional, physical, cognitive, social, spiritual and sexual. Influences on development such as issues of attachment, the media, communication skills, and relationships are considered.
- **Lifelong Connections** is a three-hour class that explores children's needs for lifelong connections. The importance of contacts and visitations for the child and family and the effects of multiple loyalties on the daily lives of children are examined. **GSC will continue to offer trainings like these in SFY 2016.**
- **Youth Panels:** GSC continued the FACES (Foster and Adoptive Care Essentials) training in 2014-2015. The FACES graduation has traditionally included a panel of current and former youth in care who have talked about their experiences and have given suggestions to the new foster and adoptive parents regarding caring for youth.
- **Youth Action Pool:** This past year YAP members have provided opening remarks at the DCYF Conference, co trained workshops at the Teen Conference, co-trained current youth in care in Strategic Sharing and conducted a workshop at the New Hampshire Transition Summit describing the transition process for foster care to adulthood. A YAP member was recently hired to be on the training staff for Education and Training Partnership at Granite State College, the agency that provides trainings to foster parents, residential staff and relative caregivers. **(YAP members will continue to be trained and provide trainings in SFY 2016 as needed).**

Additional Trainings to be conducted in FY 2016:

- Working with developmentally delayed youth and/or those have severe mental health issues.
- Ensuring youth receive appropriate transitional living skills prior to graduation.
- Working with LGTBQ youth.

## **Involving Youth/Young Adults**

Starting in May 2014 and continuing throughout this past year current and former youth in care have provided input to Granite State College in regards to the revamping of the New Hampshire Trails independent living skills curriculum. This has resulted in the revised curriculum shifting to less of a book-based program to being more experiential and utilizing new learning methods made available through the internet.

Another major undertaking started this past year is the review and eventual revamp of the Adult Living Preparation Process (ALPP). The Division's Youth Advisory Board has been a key player in this retooling process by indicating what they like about the current process and by offering suggestions for improvement. The Youth Advisory Board has also been active in the finalization of the youth Bill of Rights and in the creation of the policy.

Through the aforementioned [Public Achievement Program](#), youth at Sununu Youth Services Center have been able to provide direct input to the Facility Operations Director on ways to improve the youth experience at the facility. This has included recommendations on improving the educational system and increasing off campus educational opportunities.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families partnered with Casey Family Programs to hire a part-time youth consultant who served in this role from May to December 2014. In this role the consultant worked closely with the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality of Improvement to bring youth voice to the Division's Practices. The consultant was a member of the Practice Model Design Team. The consultant was responsible for eliciting youth feedback about the revised Practice Model Beliefs which was accomplished through the Youth Advisory Board meetings and at the Teen Conference. In addition, the consultant provided input on the permanency practices at Sununu Youth Services Center by being part of the Sununu Youth Services Center Permanency Focus Group. He also provided case consultation on individual cases, as needed.

In late May 2014, the Youth Consultant had the opportunity to shadow New Hampshire Representative Carol Shea-Porter in Washington DC as part of Foster Club's Congressional Shadow Day program. He provided Representative Porter with his ideas on how to improve the foster care system and invited her to the Teen Conference which she attended and received more ideas from other current and former youth in care.

The Child and Family Services Plan Goals for the Adolescent Program will be reviewed by the New Hampshire Youth Advisory Board in September of this year to plan for youth involvement in achieving the goals and objectives for year two.

## **Consultation with Tribes**

In regards to consultation with Indian Tribes, New Hampshire currently has no federally or state recognized Indian tribes. Benefits through the ETV program are available to Indian Children on the same basis as they are available to other children in the state. The identification and verification of all children's ethnicity, including "American Indian/Alaska Native" is established, if at all possible, during the Division's initial family contacts during the assessment phase. Youth with tribal connections are able to access the same level of benefits and services as those available to any and all other youth in the state.

## **Education and Training Voucher Program**

The New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families, Adolescent Program administers the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program. The ETV program is part of



[Aftercare Services](#) described in a previous section. In regards to the ETV program specifically, there is an application process that starts each year on January 1<sup>st</sup>. ETV is allocated per state fiscal year (July 1<sup>st</sup>-June 30<sup>th</sup>) based on each student's level of need that is established by subtracting grants and scholarships from the total cost of attendance. Also factored in is whether the student has been granted a tuition waiver through the [Tuition Waiver for Foster Children Program](#). The amount left is declared as the student's "gap" and ETV funds are provided to fill that gap up to \$5000 per state fiscal year. The total amount of assistance is not to exceed the cost of attendance and the Division ensures that the Adolescent Workers adhere to that limit.

The Tuition Waiver for Foster and Adopted Children Program has greatly enhanced the ability for youth in care to go on to college. The program provides up to twenty tuition and fee waivers per year to New Hampshire State Schools for youth formerly in out-of-home placement through the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families. Due to a legislative change, ten waiver slots are awarded to University of New Hampshire schools and ten are awarded to New Hampshire Community Colleges including Granite State College.

As a result of the same legislative change, the University System of New Hampshire and the Community College System of New Hampshire and not the New Hampshire Department of Education, Division of Higher Education is now working with the Division to manage the Tuition Waiver program. The Division collects and certifies the applications and assists the University and Community College Systems in determining the twenty recipients based on level of need.

This new partnership provided an opportunity for both systems and the Division to thoroughly evaluate the program including the waiver application and selection process. As a result of this review several key changes were implemented including:

- Only youth that had already applied to college were able to apply for a waiver;
- Notarization was no longer required as part of the application;
- Applications were accepted on a rolling basis with youth who submitted their applications by March 15<sup>th</sup> given priority status;
- The Division for Children, Youth and Families sent applications to the college systems at regular intervals as they were being certified instead of waiting to send them all out at the end of the application process;
- Returning waiver recipients still in college and in good academic standing were approved for a waiver right away and
- The Division for Children, Youth and Families established a pool of prioritized alternate waiver candidates to fill waiver slots that may become open for youth who have a change in circumstances.

The above mentioned changes to the waiver application and selection process have appeared to be effective as there were forty applicants, an increase from the year before and the applicants

were notified earlier than in previous years. Open waiver slots were filled significantly quicker ensuring that open waiver slots did not go unfilled. To support youth interested in learning more about the process for going to college, the New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation (NHHEAF) Center for College Planning offered regional trainings to foster care youth and their caregivers focused on the college admissions, application and financial aid process.

Going forward the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families and the University and Community College Systems of New Hampshire will continue their collaborative work to support and maximize the Tuition for Foster and Adopted Children Program. This will include working closely with New Hampshire colleges and universities to find ways to expedite the waiver notification process and to ensure that each tuition waiver applicant completes all of the required application and verification forms.

Other efforts to strengthen the postsecondary educational assistance program to achieve the purpose of the ETV program:

- Continuing the expansion of Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) eligibility to include youth who left state care after turning sixteen years old for relative guardianship.
- Continuing to disseminate Aftercare Services brochures that include ETV information to youth, staff and caregivers.
- Including the ETV application on the Youth Advisory Board page on the Adolescent Program Website and the New Hampshire Youth Voices Facebook page along with eligibility and contact information.
- Including information about ETV in the Foster and Adoptive newsletter known as the Connector that is sent out quarterly to current and former foster and adoptive parents.

The combination of the small size of New Hampshire and the ETV allotment received makes it possible for the Adolescent Program Specialist to review queries of new and returning ETV recipients and to ensure that there is not duplication.

## Annual Reporting of Education and Training Vouchers Awarded

(Attachment E)

Name of State: New Hampshire

	Total ETVs Awarded	Number of New ETVs
<u>Final Number:</u> <b>2013-2014 School Year</b> (July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014)	20	10
<b>2014-2015 School Year*</b> (July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015)	12	5

Comments:

\*in some cases this might be an estimated number since the APSR is due June 30, 2015.

## Section 7: Monthly Caseworker Visits

The 2010 CFSR and the state's ongoing Case Practice Reviews have provided clear evidence of the link between frequent, high quality caseworker visits and positive outcomes for children and families. As such, the Division's Supervisors and Staff have made a concerted effort to assure there is sustained attention to the federal requirements for monthly caseworker visits.

During FFY 2014, according to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families sustained an overall percentage rate of 97.2 percent of visits made on a monthly basis by caseworkers to children in foster care.

With the support of the Monthly Caseworker Visit Grant, between September 2014 and May 2015 an additional twenty-seven laptops were deployed to both Child Protection and Juvenile Justice Field Staff to further support these efficiencies across the state. It is anticipated an additional twenty to thirty staff will receive laptops later this year. Future spending of the Monthly Caseworker Visit Grant will depend on the continued success of these technological improvements and the needs of staff in order to best support their ability to conduct timely and effective caseworker visits.

## Section 8: Adoption and Legal Guardianship Incentive Payments

During FFY 2014, the Division for Children, Youth and Families did not receive any Adoption Incentive Funds. Should funds become available; the Division will re-assess its usage of the funds giving particular attention to the new statutory provisions outlined in “ACYF-CB-IM-14-03”, issued on October 23, 2014.

## Section 9: Child Welfare Demonstration Activities

New Hampshire is not an applicable Title IV-E Child Welfare Demonstration State.



## Section 10: Targeted Plans within CFSP

### DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

The Division for Children, Youth and Families has continuously reviewed its Disaster Response Plan to improve staff preparation for possible disasters, while identifying emergency preparedness changes to be consistent with best practice at the state and national levels. The Division for Children, Youth and Families has engaged with stakeholders and other Child Welfare agencies to identify areas of Disaster Preparedness that have previously been undeveloped. The Division has maintained collaboration with Child Care and Resource Agency staff who prepare child care programs for potential disasters and who have worked to identify needs following the merger of the Division for Children, Youth and Families with the Division for Juvenile Justice Services (DJJS). This merger has included identification and review of administrative processes utilized by Juvenile Justice Services (JJS) and the Sununu Youth Services Center (SYSC).

The content of the Disaster Response Plan has continued to meet the procedural needs of the Division in compliance with SSA Section 422(b) (16). Although no updates to the content have been completed, the Division has been researching and developing a new chapter that will provide information on recovery practices after the implementation of the plan. In addition, all Division for Children, Youth and Families Offices have provided updated phone contact lists and succession plans to be added to the reformatted Continuity of Operations Plan template developed by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services in collaboration with the New Hampshire Department of Safety. The new Continuity of Operations Plan template has been completed to explicitly identify the inclusion of the Juvenile Justice Services and Sununu Youth Services Center Programs and their individual program needs for a continuity plan. The new Continuity of Operations Plan is still undergoing reviews for the most efficient means to meet all the resource needs of the Division and to incorporate the Child Care Disaster Plan, residential plans and possibly interstate agreements for the district offices bordering Maine, Massachusetts and Vermont.

### Table Top Exercises

All Division for Children, Youth and Families district offices and the Central Intake Office participated in tabletop exercises designed to test the office preparedness for responding to possible or actual disasters. Tabletop exercises included the following participants: a foster parent, the District Office Manager of Operations, Juvenile Justice Services Supervisors and Child Protective Services Supervisors. Offices reported that the exercises are realistic and provide insight into what it takes to continue operations when a disaster strikes. Offices that have had unexpected circumstances which have impacted their office operation have reported that they were able to use the training received and Disaster Response Plan to organize and take steps to continue their day-to-day work. Additionally, they have provided feedback on ways that

the Disaster Response Plan can be improved to further support the staff in the Division's district offices.

The Division is reviewing the tabletop exercises for practice updates and ways to enhance how offices utilize the opportunity to prepare district office staff for disasters that interrupt their daily work. Other Divisions within the larger New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) have participated, as observers, in these tabletop exercises. The plan is for these Divisions to have tabletop exercises and hopefully join with the Division for Children, Youth and Families in a larger Department-wide exercise. Several meetings have occurred between the Department of Health and Human Services and the Division for Children, Youth and Families. The Division has consulted with the Department of Health and Human Services Emergency Services Unit regarding community multidisciplinary teams that can be engaged in the tabletop exercises with the district offices and is reviewing the use of web-based exercises hosted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

### **Information System Recovery Plan**

The Division for Children, Youth and Families has several information systems that it uses to inform and support practice. Bridges is the Division's Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) that includes client records, billing and payment information and interfaces with other information systems. An obvious need is for a recovery plan should disaster strike to disable Bridges. A disaster recovery plan was developed with the Office of Information Technology that involved moving Bridges from one server to another server (over a weekend) to determine if the recovery plan was successful. The plan was successfully tested in 2008 and provides some confidence that Bridges can be successfully recovered if a disaster strikes.

A web-based information system is utilized within the Sununu Youth Services Center for case management. This system, known as CourtStream, is reliant on network connectivity to access information and maintain documentation. In the event that the system could not be accessed, the information contained therein would remain stored on the larger network hubs and its integrity would be secure. Staff are in the process of creating paper templates of all forms utilized through the system to be available for completion during an outage and transferred into CourtStream upon resolution.

### **Child Care**

Child care licensing requirements now require licensed child care facilities to have a disaster response plan in place. The Division for Children, Youth and Families, Child Development Bureau (CDB), the Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Licensing Unit, New Hampshire Department of Safety Emergency Management, and the Child Care Resource and Referral Network have developed and disseminated two guides, "Child Care Center Emergency Preparedness Guide," and "Family Child Care Emergency Preparedness Guide." These guides have become official forms of the Division for Children, Youth and Families posted on the New Hampshire DHHS website and are used in trainings presented statewide by Child Care Resource and Referral. The Child Care Resource and Referral staff also provides technical assistance to

child care providers to help them create their emergency plans, using the guides, which include the most recent information regarding the Incident Command System, addressing all types of hazards and responses. Developing these guides was the first phase of the Division's work, and now ensures that all child care programs can have written emergency plans, as well as practice implementing these plans. In addition, contact was made with the Region I child care officials to develop and implement a multi-year planning process that ensures child care services will be available before and after a disaster strikes.

A Child Care Resource and Referral alert and response system is now in place for child care programs. The Division for Children, Youth and Families Deputy Director alerts the Division for Children, Youth and Families Staff to emergency situations as they occur across the state. The CDB Program Improvement Specialist notifies the Child Care Resource and Referral programs, targeting those in the affected area(s), and the Child Care Resource and Referral staff contact the child care programs and offers assistance.

A document has been developed and is currently being reviewed, to support a Strategic Plan for Recovery of Child Care after a disaster. The Strategic Plan uses the National Disaster Recovery Framework (FEMA, September 2011) as a guide. The Child Development Bureau partnered with the Child Care Resource and Referral Network to implement a pilot program to develop 'mentor child care programs' that can assist other child care programs to create emergency plans and practice response drills. Child Care Resource and Referral programs currently host and facilitate child care program director groups in each district office region of the state. Director groups often use these cohort groups to work together on emergency planning and receive technical assistance and training on emergency response drills. Community guests such as first responders are invited to attend director groups to discuss community planning and responses that include child care programs. Child Care Resource and Referral program managers have been invited to attend community stakeholder meetings to discuss emergency planning and response as well.

Representatives of the Child Development Bureau and the Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement, Child Care Licensing Unit and Child Care Resource and Referral participated in an Infants, Children and Youth in Shelters Workgroup to inform the development of guidance regarding special consideration of children in Mass Care Shelters. Child Care Resource and Referral programs are currently recruiting child care program staff to complete the online Save the Children Child Friendly Spaces training and to volunteer to staff a shelter child friendly space should the need arise. Participation in this workgroup also helped to inform the plan for the recovery of child care after a disaster. A statewide stakeholder group will be convened in the fall of 2015 to expand upon this work.

## **Foster Parents' Emergency Information**

Information about foster parents is entered and stored in Bridges, including foster parent re-location information so staff may easily find the re-location address. This information is collected when new applicants complete their application and when current foster parents renew their license or update their demographics. In addition, foster and adoptive parents have participated in the local office desktop exercises and the foster/adoptive parent handbook has been updated to include Disaster Response Plan information.

## **Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Report for “Go Kits”**

The Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPS) Deputy Compact Administrator may accept children entering New Hampshire from another state after an approved home study has been completed on the potential provider by field staff. Once placement has been made, the Deputy Compact Administrator ensures that children placed through the ICPC are seen monthly and quarterly reports are provided to the sending states. An ICPC Emergency Report is produced to give the field office information about children placed in their catchment area who were placed from another state’s Child Welfare Agency. The ICPC Report is sent monthly with the Children in Placement Report to be included in each Supervisor’s “Go Kit.” The report supports the Administrator in communicating the status of each child to the sending state. A similar report may be prepared for youth under the Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ).

## **Remote Access**

Juniper is software purchased by the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services to allow secure, remote access to an employee’s network resources from a remote site. The use of Juniper has been unsuccessful due to security features that require the laptops to be configured differently. There are no additional efforts planned to work with Juniper to make it function properly so it can be a dependable part of the Department’s continuity plan. Employees are increasingly utilizing laptops with remote access via Virtual Private Networks (VPN) when they are working from locations outside of the Department of Health and Human Services Network.

## **Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Disaster Response Teams**

The Division for Children, Youth and Families provided training about mandatory child abuse reporting laws to the Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team (DBHRT) comprised of individuals with experience in human services such as psychology, mental health, substance abuse, spirituality, etc. DBHRT members are trained to provide interventions in times of disaster such as behavioral health needs assessments, psychological first aid, crisis intervention, community outreach, disaster behavioral health planning and networking and community resiliency training. As a result of this experience, the Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team officials requested information about New Hampshire child abuse reporting laws and developed a protocol for DBHRT individuals to follow should they observe or be informed of an allegation of child abuse. The Division for Children, Youth and Families has continued to participate as a standing member of the Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team (DBHRT) oversight committee. The DBHRT oversight committee has expanded the training to include reporting allegations of child abuse and adult abuse. All trainings have been well attended and have been well received. Trainings have since been opened to a larger audience including: hospital employees, mental health practitioners, National Guardsmen and others who requested this training.

The Division for Children, Youth and Families has participated in a stakeholder group facilitated by the Department of Health and Human Services’ Emergency Services Unit to develop guidelines for emergency shelters on responding to infants, children and youth in shelters. The

Department of Safety, Homeland Security and Emergency Management and the New Hampshire Judicial Branch were part of a collaboration to define expectations and practices for any minor who arrives at a shelter unaccompanied. These discussions included training for shelters on when to report concerns for child abuse and neglect and when law enforcement should contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children for assistance with reunifying the child with their family.

## **Contacts with States Bordering New Hampshire**

New Hampshire has continuously supported cooperation and disaster preparation planning with all New England States especially those states that share common borders with New Hampshire. The Division has communicated with other states about how New England States might work together to respond to disasters. These discussions have included:

- Temporary placements in foster homes or residential facilities out-of-state;
- Best method for obtaining prescriptions for foster children when placed out-of-state;
- Identifying key Child Welfare Administrators/Staff for communications at the time of a disaster;
- Providing help with child visits in their foster home or residential facility;
- Exploring the idea that another state could be a backup for New Hampshire Bridges (Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System system);
- Reviewing information about how Child Welfare Agencies in Louisiana, Texas and California have responded to their disasters; and
- Sharing continuity plans and developing tabletop exercises in the New England States so New Hampshire might integrate and benefit from all of the planning work.

Ongoing efforts have explored the need for more planning and information to enhance communications, identify possible resources for evacuees, identify how personnel from one state may be able to assist another state, etc.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

*Sent as separate attachments:*

- Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment Plan;
- Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan;
- Disaster Plan;

- Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Plan; and
- Training Plan & Grids.



## Section 11: Financial Information

### **PAYMENT LIMITATIONS – TITLE IV-B, SUBPART 1**

In Fiscal Year 2005, the State expended no Title IV-B Subpart 1 or non-federal funds for child care, foster care maintenance or adoption assistance payments.

### **PAYMENT LIMITATIONS – TITLE IV-B, SUBPART 2**

The New Hampshire state and local share of spending in 1992 for Title IV-B, Subpart 2 programs was \$300,000. In State Fiscal Year 13 \$575,773.33 was outlaid by state and local resources for the purpose of supporting Title IV-B activities. This quantity was greater than the Fiscal Year 1992 base amount of \$300,000.

## Division for Children, Youth and Families Child and Family Services Plan Acronym List June 2015

ACF: Administration for Children and Families

APPLA: Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement

APSR: Annual Progress and Services Report

BOLQI: Bureau of Organizational Learning and Quality Improvement

BTBP: Better Together with Birth Parents

CAC: Child Advocacy Center

CAPTA: Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act

CASA: Court Appointed Special Advocate

CBCAP: Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention

CFBI: Community and Faith-Based Initiative

CFSP: Child and Family Services Plan

CFSS: Comprehensive Family Support Services

CIP: Court Improvement Project

COT: Caregiver Ongoing Training

CPE: Center for Professional Excellence

CPS: Child Protective Services

CPSW: Child Protective Service Worker

CQI: Continuous Quality Improvement

DCYF: Division for Children, Youth and Families

DHHS: Department of Health and Human Services

E&TP: Education and Training Partnership

FACES: Foster and Adoptive Care Essentials

FAIR: Family Assessment and Inclusive Reunification

HVNH: Home Visiting New Hampshire

ISO: Individual Service Option

JJS: Juvenile Justice Services

JPPO: Juvenile Probation and Parole Officer

LADC: Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor

NHAPP: New Hampshire Adoption Preparation and Preservation Project

NHCT: New Hampshire Children's Trust

NHFAPA: New Hampshire Foster and Adoptive Parent Association

NHIA: New Hampshire Integrated Assessment

NYTD: National Youth in Transition Database

OSRI: On-Site Review Instrument

PbS: Performance-based Standards

PFC: Partners for Change

PII: Practice Improvement Initiative

PREA: Prison Rape Elimination Act

PSSF: Promoting Safe and Stable Families

QA: Quality Assurance

RCCT: Residential Counselor Core Training

ROM: Results Oriented Management

SACWIS: Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System

SAVRY: Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth

SBC: Solution Based Casework

SBFM: Solution Based Family Meeting

SYSC: Sununu Youth Services Center

UNH: University of New Hampshire

YC: Youth Counselor